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THE

MEASURES

OF

Christian Obedience:

OR, A

DISCOURSE

Shewing, What

OBEDIENCE

Is Indispensibly Necessary to a

REGENERATE STATE,

AND WHAT

Defects are consistent with it;

FOR

The Promotion of Piety, and the Peace of Troubled Consciences.

By *JOHN KETTLEWELL*, late Vicar of *Coles-Hill*, in *Warwickshire*.

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The PREFACE.

Reader,

THE Design of this ensuing Treatise is to increase the *Piety*, and promote the *Peace* of all sincerely honest Consciences, by stating plainly and fully what are the *Terms indispensibly required of all Christian Men to their eternal Pardon and Salvation.*

In this I have endeavour'd to be as clear and particular as possible I could. For I write upon a Subject wherein all Men are infinitely concern'd; and therefore I have studied to write so, as all might understand me. I have carried on my Discourse all along, with a particular Eye to the Benefit of the *plain* and *unlearned* Reader, and suited things, as far as their Nature would bear, and my Skill would reach, to *ordinary* and *vulgar* Apprehensions. And that they might have nothing to hinder or offend them in their Progress, I have been industriously careful, through the Body of the whole Book, to insert nothing of the *learned Languages*; but wheresoever any thing of that seemed fit to be added for the sake of others, I have preserved the *Text* unmixt, and cast it into the *Margin.* In the whole Work, my study has been to speak things *useful* and *necessary* to be known, that the Weight and Worth of the Matter might purchase a favourable Censure for all the Defects of Art, which shall be found in the Composure.

By what I have here offered upon this Subject, I doubt not but it will appear, that although our *Religion* is most *strictly pure*, and *nobly vertuous*; yet is by no means *melancholy*, or apt in its *own Nature* to engender *tormenting Fears* and *endless Scruples.* For the *Terms of Pardon* and Salvation are no *intricate* or *uncertain*, but a *fixt* and *easie* thing. They are neither over-hard for our *active Powers*, nor dark and inevident to our *Understandings*: So that by the Assistance of God's Grace we may *perform* them, and be very well *assured* of it when we do. God exacts of us an *honest*, but not an *unerring* Obedience; he bears with our *weaknesses*, though not with our *wilful Failings.* And this is Ground enough whereupon to *secure Peace*, and yet in no wise to *supplant Piety*: Since although our Religion is so exactly

holy, as utterly to dash all wicked Men's presuming Hopes; yet is it so indulgent still, as to tempt no Man, who is honestly obedient, to Despair.

In pursuit of this Argument, *what Piety is indispensibly required*, and *what Failings shall be indulged*, that Men may know when to *hope* and when to *fear*, and neither foster a Peace without Piety, nor phansie such a Rigour in Piety as leaves no room for Peace, I have proceeded as *particularly* and *perspicuously* as possibly I could; being unwilling in a matter of this importance, to leave my Reader, either in *Doubt*, by an account which is too *general* and *ambiguous*; or in *darkness*, by such as is *obscure*. And to give a Prospect of the whole Business, I have laid things down in this Order in *five* Books.

In the *first* Book I have shewn *what the Condition of Happiness* is in *general*, viz. *our Obedience to the Laws of the Gospel*, it being that whereby at the last Day we must all be judg'd to live eternally. And because some are tempted to think Obedience needless when they read of Pardon and Happiness promised to other things, as *Faith*, *Repentance*, &c. I have shewn particularly of those Speeches, that they are *Metonymical*, and that Life and Mercy are not promised to them as they are separate from Obedience, but only as they effect and imply it.

But *Obedience* being a *general* Word, and Men's great Backwardness to it rendring them very slow to run it out into all those *Particulars* which are contained in it: To bring this Discourse yet *nearer*, and set it *home* upon their *Consciences*, I proceed in the *second* Book to shew, *what those Laws are in particular which we are bound to obey*, what is *the nature of those several Vertues and Vices which are enjoyned or forbidden by them*; and from *what Expectations, and under what Forfeitures we are bound to obey them*. This indeed I found to be a toilsom Work, and the most tedious part of this whole Enquiry: But I thought it extreamly needful to a *thorow Piety*, and a *well-grounded Peace*, and that made me that I would not pass it over. For in the Business of *Duty* and *Obedience*, Men will ordinarily go no further than they needs must, but stand their Ground, and dispute it out so long as they have any Post in Reserve to which they can still retreat. First, *They do not believe that this* or *that particular Vertue*, which is urged upon them, *is a Law of God*; or, if they are forced to believe that, *then they think*

it

it is not so necessary, as that Heaven and eternal Life should depend upon it; or if at last they are made to see that too, yet still *they are in Ignorance* or *Error about the nature of it*, and so have *no sense of Guilt*, or *remorse of Mind* when they *transgress* and *act against* it. And therefore to make every *particular* Law have a full Force upon them, both its *nature* and *necessity*, must be evidently laid before them. They must be shewed what that is which it requires, and under what Penalties it requires it. And then their Consciences are awakened, and their Fears are raised, and so the Law is set in its full Force, to oblige them to its Performance. Thus necessary is such a particular Discourse upon the several Laws of God and Instances of Duty, to a *pious Performance* of them; and it is no less necessary to a *peaceable Assurance* in them that do. For unless a man knows the several Instances of Duty, and understands what is meant by them; he cannot discern when he keeps, or when he breaks them, and so can have no Comfort, or promise himself any Reward upon his Performance of them.

In the *third* Book I proceed to shew *what sort of Obedience is indispensibly required of us to all the particular Laws*, which are described in the *Second*. And the necessary Qualifications of it I reduce to *two*; viz. *sincerity*, and *integrity*. In discoursing upon which I endeavour to set out all the *parts*, and to state the *just Bounds* of this Obedience; and to examine those *Pretences*, and confute those *false Grounds*, whereby men, who are unwilling to perform it, seek to evade or undermine it.

And having in the *three* first Books proceeded thus far in asserting the Necessity, and setting out the true Compass and just extent of *Piety*; I go on to consult more directly the Interest of *Peace* in those *two* that follow.

In the *fourth* Book I shew *what Defects are consistent with that indispensible pitch of Piety before described*, and *what destroy it*. And this being a Point whereupon the Peace of Consciences so nearly depends, I have been *particular* in the *Explication* of it, and *large* in the *Proof*. Those Sins which are *inconsistent* with it, and *destroy a state of Grace*, are such as are *voluntary* and *wilful*: Whereof some only *destroy the state of acceptance for the present*; but others either *greatly wound*, or *utterly extinguish that habitual Vertue, which should restore us to it for the Time to come*. But others there are, which are *allowed by it*, and *do not over-*

throw it; *viz. all such Defects as are involuntary*, whether they be Sins of *innocent unwilled ignorance*, or *Inconsideration*. In discoursing whereupon, as I have been studious to explain them so *particularly*, that no *honest Heart* might fall into *Fears* and *Doubts* about them; so have I been careful withal to add such *Marks* and *Limitations* to them, that no *wilfully ignorant*, or *inconsiderate* Sinners might take encouragement thence to presume.

In the *fifth* Book I shew *what is the Remedy for all Sin*, and the Gospel-Instrument of Reconciliation; that so when at any time Men are possessed with just Fears, by being fallen into real Danger, they may again be restor'd to Peace in their own Minds, by being first restored to God's Pardon. And having proceeded thus far in shewing what *Measures and Degrees of Piety God will exact of us*, what *Failings he will connive at in us*, and *upon what Terms*, when once we have offended him, *he will be reconciled again to us*: I have gone in the last Place to *remove several causless Grounds of Scruple*, which make good men fear where no fear is, and condemn themselves when God will graciously acquit them.

These are the Matters treated on in the ensuing Discourse, which was at first drawn up to serve the spiritual Necessities of a *truly pious Soul*, and which I have now sent abroad into the World, being made to believe it will not be altogether unserviceable to the Publick. If thereby I may promote the great End of my *Lord* and *Saviour*, in contributing to the *Growth of Piety*, and the *Peace of Consciences*, I shall think my self most happy in having been a Furtherer, tho' in a low degree, of so noble and excellent a Design. But whatever the Success in that be, I am sure I shall have the Reward of a *religious Design*, and an *honest Endeavour*, from him who estimates our *Pains*, not by their *Events*, which are not in our *own Power*, but by their *natural Tendency*, and our *Intentions*, which are. In which Confidence I send it out into the World, depending upon his Grace to set it home upon the Conscience, and make it effectual to guide the Practice, and secure the Comfort both of thee and me. For which End I hope I shall have the hearty Prayers of all good Men; especially of those, if any such there be, who shall receive Benefit by this Treatise.

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pardon

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Willm THE Hewetson's Book

INTRODUCTION.

ROM. viii. 1.

There is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.

AMong all those things which employ the minds of Religious and Considerate Men, there is none is a matter of such thoughtful care and solicitous enquiries, as their *Eternal Happiness* or *Misery* in the *next* World.

For in Christ's Religion there are *three* great Articles, which being believed, and seriously considered by a nature restlesly desirous of its own happiness (and such ours is) must needs render it very inquisitive after its future good Estate, and they are these; The *Immortality of the Soul*, the *Resurrection of the Body*, and the *great Day of Doom or last Judgment*. Whosoever is firmly perswaded of these three, as every man is, or at least pretends to be, who professes himself a *Christian*, he assuredly believes that when this Life is over, both his Body and Soul shall live again, and be endlesly Delighted or Tormented, Comforted or Distressed in the next World, according as his condition is when he leaves this. For by the Doctrine of *Eternal Life* he is assured that his Soul shall live, and be adjudged to an Eternal bliss or misery. By the Article of the *Resurrection*, he is perswaded that his Body, with all its powers, shall spring out of the dust, and be again enlivened with its ancient Soul, to be a sharer of its state, and jointly to undergo an endless train of most exquisite woes or pleasures. And since it is the very frame and fundamental principle of our Natures studiously to pursue pleasure, and

to fly as fast from pain, to seek good, and to avoid evil: These states of future Happiness and Misery, are such as no Man, who sees and believes them, can possibly be unaffected with, or unconcern'd in. But whosoever in his own thoughts views and beholds them, must needs find all his faculties awake, and through an innate care, and natural instinct, solicitously inquisitive after that lot which shall fall to their own share.

Now if this endless happiness and misery both of Soul and Body in the next World were only *casual* and *contingent*, the gift of *blind chance*, or *partial* and *arbitrary favour*; then would the belief of it perplex us indeed with fears and misgiving thoughts, but never encourage us on to any exact care, or diligent inquiry. It would be in vain for us to seek what we could never find, and downright folly to endeavour after satisfaction and certainty in things which are altogether Casual and Arbitrary. For what comes by *chance* is neither foreseen by us, nor subject to us. And what is given *arbitrarily*, without all rule or reason, is as fickle and unconstant as Arbitrary Will it self is. It cannot be prevented by any endeavours, because it doth not regard them; neither can it be collected beforehand from any fixt rule of reason, seeing it observes none. And what neither our greatest wisdom can foretel, nor our exactest care prevent, it is wholly to no purpose to make a matter of our study and enquiry.

But as for the Everlasting happiness or misery of our Souls and Bodies in the other Life, and at the Resurrection, they are not left at *random*, nor fall out by *accident*; but are dispensed by a *wise hand*, and according to a *fixt* and *established rule*. For it is God who distributes them, and this distribution is in Judgment; and the procedure in that is by Laws, and those Laws are unalterably fixt for us, and most plainly declared and published to us in the Gospel. So that now it is not an impossible, no nor extream difficult thing for us to understand, which shall be our own state in the next World. For the Laws are well known, proclaimed daily to every ear, by a whole order of men set apart for that purpose; their sense and meaning is obvious to any common understanding; and the Judgment according to them at that day will be true and faithful. God will Absolve all those whom his Gospel acquits, but Condemn every man whom it accuses.

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There will be no preventing of Justice through fear or favour, no Sentence passed through partiality or ill will; but a Tryal every way unbyassed and uncorrupt, where *Every one shall receive according to the things done in the Body*, 2 Cor. 5. 10. And *Judgment shall pass upon all Men according to their works*, Rom. 2. 6.

And thus, as the belief of the two former Articles, *The immortal state, either of Bliss or Misery for our Souls*, and the *Resurrection of our Bodies*, will inflame us with *restless desire*: So, if we seriously believe it, will this third Article of the *great and general Judgment* possess us with sure *hopes* of being satisfied in this great enquiry, which of the two States will fall to our own share.

And as this belief of the last Judgment will be the most effectual means to *encourage*; so will it be withal the surest to *guide* our Enquiries after it. It chalks us out a method for our search, and directs us to the readiest course for satisfaction. For if the happiness and misery of the next World is to be dispensed to every man for a reward or punishment, according to the direction of those Laws which promise or threaten them; then have we nothing more to do in this enquiry, but to examine well what those Laws are, what obedience they require, what allowances and mitigations they will bear, and what lot and condition they assign us. For in that day we shall be look'd upon to be what they declare us; and be doom'd to that state which they pronounce for us. What they speak to us all now, that the Judge of all the World will pronounce upon us all then: Their sentence shall be his, and what they denounce he will execute. He will judge us by no other Measure but his own Laws; those very Laws which he has taken so much care to proclaim to us, and continually to press upon us; which he has put into every one of our hands, and made to be sounding daily in our ears; the *laws* and *sanctions of the Gospel*. Our blessed Saviour Christ the Judge himself has told us this long ago, *The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge men at the last day*, John 12. 48. And his great Apostle *Paul* has again confirm'd it, *Rom.* 2. *God shall judge the World* at that day *according to my Gospel*, ver. 16. If we perform what those Laws peremptorily require, they now already declare us blessed, and such at the last day will Christ pronounce us. But if by sinning

againſt them we fall ſhort of it, they denounce nothing but everlaſting Woes and Miſeries, and thoſe he will execute: For he tells us plainly, that when he ſhall come to judgment *in the Glory of the Father with his holy Angels, he will reward every man according to his Works*, Matt. 16. 27. *To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for glroy and immortality*, he will give *eternal life*, Rom. 2. 7. *But to them who obey not the Truth, but obey unrighteouſneſs, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh*, and that *upon every man, whether he be Jew or Gentile*, ver. 8, 9. For all this ſhall be acted in the greateſt integrity, without preferring one before another. It is only the difference in Mens works, which ſhall difference their conditions; but they who have been equal in their ſins, ſhall be equal alſo in their ſufferings. For *at the appearance of Jeſus Chriſt, God*, as S. *Peter* tells us, *without any reſpect of perſons judges according to every Man's work*, 1 Pet. 1. 7, 17.

The way then whereby to ſatisfie our ſelves in this great matter, is this, To look well into the Goſpel, there to learn what we ſhould be; and into our own hearts and lives, there to ſee what indeed we are; and thence to conclude what in the next World, whether in a ſtate of Life or Death, we ſhall be.

And to ſhew this to every man, and to let them ſee now beforehand how he ſtands prepared for the next World, and whether, if he ſhould be called away preſently to the Bar of that Judgment, he would be everlaſtingly acquitted or condemned in it, is my preſent buſineſs and deſign. It is to let us ſee our *Eternal Condition* before we enter on it, and to make it evident to every man, who is both capable and willing to be inſtructed, what ſhall be his endleſs doom of Life or Death before the Judge pronounce it.

And ſince the *Rule* of that Court, whereby we muſt all be tryed, and which muſt meaſure out to us either Life or Death, is, as we have ſeen, none other than the *Goſpel* of our Judge and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; that I may manage this inquiry with the greater light and clearneſs, I will proceed in this method.

Firſt, I will enquire, *What is that condition of our Happineſs or Miſery, which the Goſpel indiſpenſibly exacts.*

Secondly,

Secondly, *What are its mitigations and allowances, those defects which it pardons and bears with.*

And when at any time we fall short of this condition, and thereby forfeit all right and title to that Happiness and Pardon which is promised to us upon it: Then,

Thirdly, *What are those remedies and means of recovery, which it points us out for restoring our selves again unto a state of Grace and Favour, and whereupon we shall be reconciled.*

And having by this means discovered what in the great and general Judgment shall really and truly determine our last Estate, what shall be connived at in it; and, when once 'tis lost, what shall restore to it: I shall in the

Fourth and last place, *Remove those groundless doubts and scruples, which perplex the minds of good and safe, but yet erring and misguided, people concerning it.*

And having in this manner cleared up all these things relating to our last doom, and shewed both what in the Judgment shall be indispensibly required to our Salvation; what Defects do not overthrow, but consist with it; what remedies, when 'tis wounded or lost, can heal and restore us to it; and what, and of how great consideration those things really are, which being wrong understood, do often create causeless fears and jealousies in good peoples minds about it: Having, I say, clearly accounted for all these, I suppose, I may think I have said enough to shew Men their Future State, and fairly take leave of this Argument.

BOOK I.

Of the indiſpenſible condition of Happineſs in the general.

CHAP. I.

Of Obedience, the general condition of Happineſs.

THAT *Condition which the Goſpel indiſpenſibly requires of us*, and *which it to mete out to us our laſt doom of Bliſs or Miſery*, is in the *General* our *Obedience*. When we are brought to that Bar, and ſtand to be judged according to thoſe Laws which are proclaim'd to us in the Goſpel, it is only our having kept them, and repented of all ſuch Tranſgreſſions of them as we have wilfully been guilty of, which can capacitate us to be rewarded by them. For 'tis juſt with them, as it is with all other Laws, they never promiſe any thing but to Obedience, but threaten and puniſh all that diſobey. Whoſoever breaks and deſpiſes them, is guilty; they do not comfort but accuſe, not acquit but condemn him. For there is no Law that is wiſely ordered, but is ſufficiently guarded againſt affronts, and back'd with ſuch puniſhments as will make it every Man's intereſt to fulfil and keep it. The evil threatned, muſt always by far exceed the pleaſure that is reaped by diſobedience; ſo that no Man may have any temptation ſufficient to bear him out in Sin, or ever hope to be a gainer by his Tranſgreſſion.

This is the tenour of all wiſe Laws, whoſe Enactors have both *Wit* and *Power* ſufficient to defend them. They have dreadful Puniſhments annexed to them, which take place upon Diſobedience; they encourage and reward

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the Obedient, but ſeverely puniſh all that dare preſume to diſobey.

And this is moſt eminently ſeen in all the Laws of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. He gave them for the *compleateſt Rules* to Men's Lives, and has annexed to them moſt *glorious Promiſes* to encourage our Obedience, but has made them breath out nothing but Woes, and *intolerable Puniſhments* to all that diſobey.

He has given them for *Rules of Life*, and *annexed Rewards or Encouragements to Obedience.* He never intended his Laws for an entertainment of our Eyes, but for a Rule of our Actions; not for a matter of talk and diſcourſe, but of practice; not to be complemented by words of honour, and lofty expreſſions, but to be own'd in our Lives, and ſerved by Obedience. He is our King, and iſſues out his Laws as the Inſtruments of his Government: He is our Lord, and they are Rules for his Service. They muſt be guides of our Lives and Actions; it is not enough to know and talk of them; but, as ever we hope to live by them, we muſt do and keep them. For in the end they will be available to no Man's Happineſs, but his who has conſcientiouſly performed them. *In Chriſt Jeſus*, or the Chriſtian Religion, ſays S. *Paul*, *nothing* avails but *keeping of the Commandments of God*, 1 Cor. 7. 19. *Bleſſed are they*, ſaith S. *John*, *who do the Commandments, for they only have right to the Tree of Life*, Rev. 22. 14. It is not an idle wiſh, or ineffectual endeavour, but a thorough practice and performance of Chriſt's Laws which can continue us in his Love, and approve us Righteous in his Judument. *If ye keep my Commandments*, ſays he, *ye ſhall abide in my Love*, Joh. 15. 10. *Let no man deceive you*, for it is *he* only *that* * *doth Righteouſneſs*, who in God's account *is Righteous*, 1 Joh. 3. 7. They only are pronounced Righteous and Sons of God in the Goſpel's eſtimation, who *walk after the Spirit*, Rom. 8. 4. who *are led by the ſpirit*, verſ. 14. who bring forth *the fruits of the ſpirit*, (all words expreſſing Action and Practice) *Gal.* 5. 16, 22. No Man therefore will be acquitted and rewarded at that Bar barely for knowing and * diſcourſing, for wiſhing or deſiring; but only for working and obeying. Such only the Goſpel reckons for true Servants now; *his Servants ye are*, not whom you confeſs in words, but *whom* in acti-

* *Joh.* 2, 7, 29.

* ἔργοις δικαιούμενοι, μὴ λόγοις. Clem. Ro. 1 Epiſt. ad Cor. c. 30.

ons *you obey*, Rom. 6. 16. And such only he will honour and reward then. For it is *not every one* who fawns upon me in his words, whilst he reproaches me in his actions, *who says unto me, Lord, Lord,* that *shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he* only *who doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven:* Which Will he had just then proclaim'd to them in that Volume of Christian Laws, which was published in the Sermon upon the Mount, whereof this is in part the conclusion, *Mat.* 7. 21. He tells us that when the Son of Man shall come to Judgment, *he will reward every Man according to his works*, Mat. 16. 27. And he repeats it again in his declaration to S. *John, Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every Man according as his works shall be*, Rev. 22. 12. And so it was in that Prophetick sight of the Last Judgment, which this same Apostle had vouchsafed him, *Rev.* 20. For there, as we are told, when *the Sea gave up the Dead which were in it; and Death and Hell delivered up the Dead which were in them; and they all, both small and great stood before the Throne, and him that sate thereon: They were judged every man according to his WORKS*, vers. 11, 12, 13.

His Laws then Christ has given us, not for Talk and Discourse, but for Action and Practice; and his Promises he has annexed to them, not as rewards of Idleness, but only of active Service and Obedience: Wherein if Men fail, God's Rewards belong not to them; they can make no claim or colourable pretence to them, because they cannot shew that which is to be rewarded by him.

Nay farther, if men disobey, they are not only excluded from all *Glorious Hopes*; but are moreover put into a desperate state of *fears* and *dreadful Expectations*. For God has back'd his Laws with *Threatnings* as well as *Promises*. And as they propose most noble *Rewards* to all that are Obedient; so likewise do they breath out most intolerable *Punishments* to all that disobey. For every Man at the last day will be declared *a Child of Wrath*, who is *a Son of Disobedience*; and he shall most certainly be Damned who dies, without amendment and Repentance, in works which are wilfully and deliberately sinful. Christ's Gospel has already judged this long before-hand; and at that day he will confirm it. *When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his Angels:*

gels: i. e. when he ſhall come with his Royal attendance to judge the World, *He will take vengeance*, ſays S. *Paul*, *on all them that OBEY not his Goſpel, who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord*, 2 Theſ. 1. 7, 8. When he comes in ſtate with *the ten thouſands of his Saints*, it will be *to execute Judgment upon all that are Ungodly, for all the Ungodly DEEDS which they have committed*, Jude 14, 15. And when our Lord himſelf gives a relation of his proceedings at that day, he tells us that whoſoever they be, or whatſoever they may pretend, if their works have been Diſobedient, they ſhall hear no Sentence from him but what conſigns them to Eternal Puniſhment. *I will profeſs* thus *unto them*, ſays he, *I never knew you: Depart from me, ye that WORK iniquity*, Matt. 7. 23.

This will be the method of Chriſt's Judgment; and theſe the meaſures of his Sentence: He will pronounce Mercy and Life upon all that are Obedient, but Death and Hell to all that Diſobey.

And indeed it were height of folly and madneſs to expect he ſhould do otherwiſe, and to fanſie that when he comes to judge us, as S. *Paul* ſays, *according to the* Laws of his *Goſpel*, he ſhould abſolve and reward us, when in our Works and Actions we have tranſgreſſed them. For this were to thwart his own rule, and to go croſs to his own meaſures; it were to encourage thoſe whom his Laws threaten; to acquit ſuch as they condemn; And, in one word, not to judge *according* to them, as he has expreſly declared he will, but *againſt* them.

If we would know then what condition we ſhall be adjudged to in the next World, we muſt examine what our Obedience has been in this. We can have no aſſurance of a favourable Sentence in that Court, but only by the doing of our Duty. Our laſt doom ſhall turn, not upon our *knowing* or *not knowing*, our *willing* or *not willing*; but upon our *obeying* or *diſobeying*. It is in vain to caſt about for other Marks, and to ſeek after other Evidences: Nothing leſs than this performance of our Duty can avail us unto life; and by the *merits of Chriſt*, and the *grace of his Goſpel*, it ſhall.

And thus we ſee in the *general* what thoſe terms and that condition are, which, to mete out our laſt doom of Bliſs or Miſery, the Goſpel indiſpenſibly exacts of us.

It

It is nothing leſs than a *working Service* and *Obedience*; the enquiry to be made at that day being only this, whether we *have done what was commanded us.* If we have performed what was required of us, we ſhall be pronounced Righteous, and ſentenced to Eternal Life: But if we have wilfully tranſgreſſed, and wrought Wickedneſs, without Amendment and Repentance, we ſhall then be declared incorrigible Sinners, and adjudged to Everlaſting Death.

This indeed is a very great Truth, but yet ſuch as very few are willing to ſee and to conſider of. For Obedience is a very laborious Service, and a painful Task; and they are not many in number who will be content to undergo it. And if a man may have no juſt hopes upon any thing leſs than it, the Caſe of moſt Dying Men is deſperate. But as Men will live and die in Sin, ſo will they live and die in hopes too. And therefore they catch at ſofter terms, and build upon an eaſier condition. And becauſe the Goſpel promiſes Salvation, and a happy ſentence to *Faith*, *Love*, *Repentance*, our *being in Chriſt*, our *knowing Chriſt*, and other things beſides Obedience; They conclude that they ſhall be acquitted at that Bar upon the account of *any*, or *all* of theſe, though they do not obey with them: They make Faith, Love, Repentance and the reſt, to be ſomething ſeparate from Obedience; ſomething which will ſave them, when that is wanting. So that if they *be in Chriſt*, if they *know* and *believe with the Mind*, and *love* and *repent in their Hearts*; their hope is to be abſolved at the laſt day, be their Lives and Actions never ſo Diſobedient.

But this is a moſt dangerous and damning Error: For it makes Men ſecure from danger, till they are paſt all poſſibility of recovering out of it; and cauſes them to truſt to a falſe ſupport ſo long, till it lets them drop into Hell, and ſink down in Damnation.

And although it be ſufficiently evident from what has been already ſaid, that our Obedience is that only thing which will be admitted as a juſt plea, and as a qualification able to ſave us in that Court: Yet becauſe I would fully ſubvert all thoſe falſe grounds, whereupon Men ſupport their pernicious hopes and ſinful lives together, I will go on to prove it ſtill further.

And

And this will be moſt plainly effected by ſhewing that all *thoſe other terms* and *conditions, whereto the Goſpel ſometimes promiſes Pardon and Happineſs, concerning all in this, ſave us no otherwiſe than by being Springs and Principles of our Obedience.* They are not oppoſed to our doing of our Duty, and keeping the Commandments; but imply it. For when Pardon is promiſed to *Faith*, to *Love*, to *Repentance*, or any thing elſe; it is never promiſed to them *ſeparate* from Obedience, but as *containing* it. Obedience is that ſtill for which a man is ſaved and pardoned? it is not excluded from them, but expreſſed by them.

In order to a clearer apprehenſion of the truth of this, I think fit to obſerve that there is an ordinary Figure and Form of Speech very uſual both with God and Men, which the Rhetoricians call a *Metonymie* or *Tranſnomination*, and that is a *transferring of a word, which is the particular Name of one thing to expreſs another.* The uſe of it is this, that in things which have a near relation and dependence upon each other, as particularly the *cauſe* and its *effects* have, the particular name of either may many times ſignifie both, ſo that when the name only of one is expreſſed, yet really both are meant and intended. And then by that word, which in its proper ſenſe ſtands only for the effect, we are to underſtand, not it alone, but together with it the cauſe alſo that produced it: And by that which properly ſignifies the cauſe, we are to mean, not the bare cauſe alone, but, beſides it, the effect which flows from it likewiſe.

As for the latter of theſe, the *bare naming of the cauſe when we intend, together with it, to expreſs its natural conſequent and effect too*; becauſe it is that which chiefly concerns our preſent buſineſs, I will ſet down ſome inſtances of it which daily occurr in common ſpeech. If we adviſe a Man to *truſt his Phyſician* or his *Lawyer*, our meaning is not barely that he ſhould *give credit* to them; but together with that, that he ſhew the effect of ſuch credit, in *following* and *obſerving* them. If we are earneſt with any Man to *hearken to ſome advice* that is given him, we intend not by hearkning to expreſs barely his *giving ear* to it, but beſides that his ſuffering the effects of ſuch attention in *Practiſing* and *Obeying* it. And thus we commonly ſay that we have got a Cold, when we mean a

Diſeaſe

Disease upon Cold; or a Surfeit, when we understand a sickness upon Surfeiting. In these, and many other instances which might be mentioned, we daily find that in the speech and usage of Men, the cause alone is oft-times named, when the effect is withal intended, and accordingly understood, to be expressed; are that both are meant, when barely one is spoken. The effect doth so hang upon its cause, and so naturally and evidently follow after it, that we look upon it as a needless thing to express its coming after, when once we have named its cause which goes before: But we ordinarily judge it to be sufficiently mentioned, when we have expressed that cause, which, as is evident to us all, produces and inferrs it.

And as it is thus in the speech of *Men*, so is it in the Language of *God* too. He talks to us in our own way, and uses such forms of speech and figurative expressions, as are in common use among our selves. And to seek no farther for instances of this, than these that lie before us, he expresses our *Works* and *Obedience* by our *Knowledge*, our *Repentance*, our *Love*, and such other *Causes* and *Principles* as effect and produce it.

For we must take notice of this also, that our outward Works and Actions depend upon a train of powers within us, which, as springs and causes of them, order and effect them. For our *Passions* excite to them; our *Understandings* consider of them and direct them; our *Wills* command and choose them; and then afterwards, in pursuance of all these, our *Bodily Powers* execute and exert them. The actions of a Man flow from all the ingredients of the Humane Nature; each Principle contributes its share, and bears a part towards it. For from the constitution of our natural frame, our Actions are placed wholly in the power of our own Wills; and our Wills are set in a middle station, to be moved by our Appetites and Passions, and guided and directed by our Minds or Intellects. We do and perform nothing but what we will; neither do we will any thing but what we know and desire; what our Reason and Passion inclines and directs to. And because these three inward faculties, our *Minds*, our *Wills*, and *Passions*, give being and beginning to our outward Works and Practice: Therefore are they, by the Masters of *Moral Philosophy* and *Divinity*,

nity, ordinarily called the *Cauſes* and *Principles of Humane Actions.*

But theſe three Principles of Humane Actions in *General* lie not more open to produce good than evil. They are all under the unreſtrain'd power of our own free Will: It is that which determines them either for God or againſt him; but in themſelves they are indifferently fitted, and ſerve equally to bring forth Acts of Obedience or of Diſobedience and Sin. To make theſe Principles therefore of *Works* or *Actions in General*, to become Principles of *Good Works* and *Obedience*, there are other nearer tempers and qualifications required, which may determine them, that in *themſelves* are free to both, to effect one, and be Authors of ſuch Actions only whereby we ſerve and obey God. And this is done by the nearer and more immediate efficiency of *Faith*, *Repentance*, *Love*, and the like. For he who knows God's Laws, and believes his Goſpel with his Underſtanding; who in his Heart loves God, and hates Sin; whoſe Will is utterly reſolved for good, and againſt evil: He it is, whoſe faculties in *themſelves* indifferent are thus determinately diſpoſed, who is ready and prepared to perform his Duty. His Faith directs him to thoſe Laws, which he is to Obey, and to all the powerful Motives to Obedience: it ſhews him how it is bound upon him by all the Joys of Heaven, and by all the Pains of Hell; and this quickens his Paſſions, and confirms all good Reſolutions, and makes him in his Will and Heart to purpoſe and deſire it. And when both his Mind, his Will, and Paſſions, which were before indifferent, are thus gained over and determinately fixed for it; in the efficiency of inward Principles, there is no more to be done, but he is in the ready way to work and perform it in outward operation. So that as our Minds, Wills, and Paſſions, are Principles of Humane Actions in General, whether good or Evil: Theſe nearer diſpoſitions, our Faith, Repentance, &c. are Principles particularly of good Works and Obedience.

And ſince our obedient Actions proceed in this manner from the power and efficiency of theſe Principles: God, according to our own way of expreſſing things, is wont many times only to name them, when he intends withal to expreſs our Obedience it ſelf which reſults from them. Although he barely mention one, yet he underſtands

ſtands both; and in ſpeaking of the cauſe, he would be taken to imploy the effect likewiſe. Thus when he promiſeth *Pardon and Salvation* to our *knowledge and belief of his Goſpel*, to our *Repentance from our Sins*, to our *Love* and *fear of God*, which, with ſeveral others, are thoſe preparatory diſpoſitions, that fix and determine our Minds, Wills, and Paſſions, indifferent in themſelves, to effect Obedient Actions; he doth not in any wiſe intend that theſe ſhall ſave us, and procure Pardon for us without Obedience, but only by ſignifying and implying it. Whereſoever Mercy and Salvation at the laſt day are promiſed, and this condition of our working and obeying is not mentioned, it is always meant and underſtood, that which ſuch mercy was promiſed to, is either the *cauſe* of our Obedience, or the *effect* and *ſign* of it. The ſpeech is *metonymical*, and more was meant by it than was expreſſed. Though the word was not named, yet the thing was intended; for Obedience is ever requiſite to Pardon, and nothing has Mercy promiſed to it in the laſt Judgment, but what ſome way or other is a ſign of it, or produces and effects it.

This I might well take for granted upon the ſtrength of that proof which has been already urged for our Obedience, being the ſole condition of our being acquitted at that day. But becauſe the intereſt of Souls is ſo much concern'd in it, I will be yet more particular, and proceed to ſhew further that this ſenſe and explication of all ſuch places is the very ſame that God himſelf has expreſly put upon them. For concerning all thoſe things, whereto he has promiſed a favourable ſentence at the laſt Judgment, he aſſures us that they are of no account with him, nor will be owned as a good plea to that Bar when they are ſeparate from Obedience, but then only when they effect and work it. But when he ſays that Faith, Repentance, Love, or any other thing ſhall ſave us, he means not all, or any, but only a working Faith, an obedient Repentance, an active Love; a Faith, Love, and Repentance, which do not overlook Obedience, but accompany and produce it. So that firſt or laſt Obedience is ſtill that wherein all the reſt muſt concenter and agree, that alone condition which our Judge will accept, and which we may ſafely truſt to. And this will fully appear by running over the particulars.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of Pardon promiſed to Faith, Knowledge, and being in Chriſt.

FIRST, this condition of our acceptance which is to mete out to us our laſt doom of Bliſs and Miſery, and whereto Life and Pardon are promiſed at the laſt day, is ſometimes called *Knowledge*, or, what is only a more particular way of knowing, a knowing upon witneſs or teſtimony, *Faith*. *By*, or upon the account of, *his Knowledge*, or the Knowledge of him; *ſhall my Righteous Servant*, when he ſits to judge them, *juſtifie many*, ſays God of our Judge and Saviour Chriſt by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, *Iſa.* 53. 11. And *this is Life Eternal*, ſays our Lord himſelf, *to know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent*, Joh. 17. 3. And then as for *Faith*, which is the particular way of knowledge among us Chriſtians, who owe all that we know in order to Heaven and Happineſs to the Witneſs and Teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt, the places which promiſe Life and Pardon unto it, are to be met with in abundance. *Whoſoever believes on me*, ſays our Saviour, *ſhall not periſh, but have Everlaſting Life*, Joh. 3. 15, 16. And again, *This is the will of him that ſent me, that whoſoever believes on me may have Everlaſting Life*, Joh. 6. 40. And when he ſends out his Apoſtles after his Reſurrection, to proclaim the terms of Mercy and Salvation to all the World, he bids them ſay, *Whoſoever believeth and is Baptized ſhall be ſaved*, Mar. 16. 16.

Faith or *Belief* in the *General*, is a *thinking ſomething to be true, upon the Teſtimony of thoſe Perſons who declare it.* And herein it differs from other ſorts of *Knowledge*, becauſe in them, we believe upon the evidence and apparent reaſon of the *things themſelves*; but in this, upon the witneſs and authority of thoſe *Perſons who reveal* them. For then we are ſaid to *know*, *when we aſſent upon the Authority of things*; but then to *believe*, *when we aſſent upon the Authority of Perſons*; when, not the evidence of the things revealed, but the word and teſtimony of the revealer make us give credit to his Revelation.

This

This is the nature of Faith in general, it is a giving credit to a thing, or taking it to be true, upon the Teſtimony or Authority of ſuch Perſons as declare it. And according to the difference of this Teſtimony, our Faith upon it is differenced and diſtinguiſhed alſo. For if we believe any thing upon the bare word of a Man, it is an *Humane*; if upon the bare word and teſtimony of God, it is a *Divine* Faith.

Divine Faith then is nothing elſe, but *a belief of Divine Revelations*, or a taking any thing to be true, becauſe God has told us that it is ſo. And therefore we may be ſaid to have Divine Faith of as many things, as God has any way atteſted or revealed to us. And as for God's Revelations, they have been derived to us in ſeveral ways, and by ſeveral inſtruments.

For, ſome things God has revealed to us, by the *light of nature*. That light came from him, and is his Revelation. For † *the Spirit of a Man is the Candle of the Lord*, which, as S. *John* ſaith in another caſe of our Saviour, *enlightens every Man that cometh into the World*, Joh. 1. 9. And in this general ſenſe of Faith, for a *natural Faith*, or a belief of all natural Revelations; all matters of knowledge are likewiſe matters of Faith, becauſe at laſt all natural light and evidence of things reſt upon God's Revelation; that every evidence being no otherwiſe a proof to us that things are true, than we are aſſured that God is the Author of it, and that it is his Teſtimony and Declaration to them that they are ſo. And by this way of Revelation, or this natural light, God has declared to us two great Foundations of all Religion, *his own Exiſtence*, and *his Providence*; or that there is a God, and that he will love and reward all ſuch as ſerve and worſhip him. The belief of which Articles ſo teſtified, S. *Paul* affirms to be a part of *Faith*; yea, a part ſo *fundamental*, as is abſolutely neceſſary to our pleaſing God, and to all Religion: *Without Faith*, ſaith he, *it is impoſſible to pleaſe God*; *for he who comes to God, muſt believe that* HE IS, *and that he is a* REWARDER *of them that diligently ſeek him*, Heb. 11. 6.

† Prov. 20. 27.

Other things God has revealed, not by the *Light of Nature*, ſeeing they are ſuch things as that alone could never have diſcovered to us; but either by his own *immediate voice or inſpiration*, or by the *mediation* and *meſſage of inſpired Men*.

By

By the former, he reavealed to *Noah the drowning of the old World*, Gen. 6. 13. the belief whereof is called *Noah's Faith*, Heb. 11. 7. To *Abraham*, his having a *numerous issue* by his *Wife Sarah*, when as yet they had no Child, and in all appearance were too *Old* ever to expect one, *Gen.* 15. 5, 6. and *Chap.* 17. 17, 19. The belief whereof is likewise call'd *Abraham's*, *Faith*, *Heb.* 11 17. 18, 19. To *Moses*, his *passing over all the Houses of the Israelites*, where he should see the *Blood* of the Paschal Lamb sprinkled for a *Token*, when he would slay all the First-born throughout all the Land of *Egypt*, *Exod.* 12. 12, 13. The belief of which Revelation, is also call'd the *Faith of Moses*, *Heb.* 11.28.

By the latter, he reveal'd his will more largely to the whole *People of Israel*, by the mouth and † *Mediation* of his Servant *Moses*; and because both *God* and *Man* concurr'd in this Testimony, their belief of his message was their *Faith*, *not in God only*, but, together with him, in his *Servant Moses* too. For because the Law and Religion which they received, though it came originally from God, was yet derived down to them immediately by *Moses's* Ministry, and they knew no otherwise what God had spoken to them, than by his Testimony, and upon his Authority; therefore are they said in believing and embracing that Divine Law, which was delivered to them by *Moses*, to believe, not *the Lord* alone, but also his *Servant Moses*, *Exod.* 14. 31. *Joh.* 5. 46. To be *Baptized into Moses*, 1 Cor. 10. 2. To be *Moses's Disciples*, *Joh.* 9. 28. To *trust* or place their hope *in Moses*, *Joh.* 5. 45. To *obey* or *hearken* unto *Moses*, *Luk.* 16. 31. † Gal. 3. 19.

But the most clear and full Revelation, that God ever made of his will to Men, was by the message and mediation of his own Son, *Jesus Christ*. For God, *who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past to* the Jews by *Moses*, and to *the Fathers by the Prophets; hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son*, Heb. 1. 1. And the belief of his Gospel, or taking for certain truths upon his authority, all those things which he has declared to us in God's Name, is call'd the *Christian*, as the other was the *Mosaick Faith*. For he being the great Author and Deriver of this last and greatest Revelation of God down to us, and our belief of it being upon his immediate Authority, he being, as S. *Paul* says, *the Author and*

Finisher of our Faith, Heb. 12. 2. our belief of it is called, not only *Faith towards God*, Heb. 6. 1. but also *Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*, Acts 20. 21. And because the knowledge of our whole Religion got into our Minds this way, upon our submission to Christ's Authority, and our Faith or belief of his Testimony; therefore is our *Religion* itself, most commonly in the Scriptures called our *Faith*. The preaching of it, is called *Preaching the Faith*, Gal. 1. 23. The hearing of it, *hearing of Faith*, Gal. 3. 2. The professing of it, a *profession of Faith*, Heb. 10. 23. The contending for it, a *striving for the Faith*, Phil. 1. 27. The erring in it, an *erring from the Faith*, 1 Tim. 6. 10. The falling from it, *a making shipwrack of the Faith*, 1 Tim. 1. 19. Obedience to it, the *Obedience of Faith*, Rom. 1. 5. And the Righteousness required in it, and effected by it, *the Righteousness of Faith*, Rom. 4. 11, 13.

So that in like manner, as the *Mosaick Faith* was a belief of the Divinity of the *Mosaick* Law and Religion upon the *Authority of Moses*: The *Christian Faith* is a belief of the Divine institution of our Christian Religion, upon the *Authority of Jesus Christ*. It is a taking upon his word, all those things for truths of God, which he has declared to us in God's Name. A belief begot in us by virtue of his Testimony, that all his Doctrines are God's Truths; that all his Laws, are God's Precepts; that all his Promises, are God's Promises; and that all his Threats, are God's Threatnings: In summ, that that whole Religion and Gospel, which Christ has delivered to us in God's Name, is the very Religion and Word of God.

The belief of all this upon the *Authority of Christ*, makes our *Faith Christian*; and the *good effects* of it upon our *Hearts* and *Lives*, make it *justifying and saving*. For when, by virtue of this Faith, we truly Repent and sincerely Obey, which is the great condition, as we have seen, whereupon at the last day we must all be pardoned and justified Eternally; it is a *justifying*: As when by virtue of it, we are saved and delivered from the dominion and service, as well as from the Eternal Punishment of our Sins, which as the Angel hath *b* assured us, are those principal Evils that Christ came to *save us from*, it is a *saving* Faith.

b Mat. 1. 2.

This

This is the nature of our *Chriſtian Knowledge*, and of our *Chriſtian Faith*. And as for it now, under the influences of the Divine Grace, it is the very *fundamental cauſe* and natural ſpring of all our Chriſtian Service and Obedience. For it is becauſe we believe and know Jeſus to be the Lord, and what his Laws are, and how he will deal both with the Keepers and the Breakers of them, that we ſet our ſelves in very Deed to obſerve and keep them. It is our knowledge and belief, which lets us ſee the Truth and Reaſonableneſs of his Precepts, the Power of his Aſſiſtances, the Glory of his Rewards, and the Terror of his Puniſhments; and in all reſpects convinces us of the beauty and profit of Obedience. And this ſight and conviction in our Minds, cannot well miſs, if we duly attend thereto, of gaining our Hearts and Reſolutions. For the belief of his endleſs Judgments, will raiſe our Fears; the belief of his infinite Rewards, will quicken our Hopes; the belief of his inexpreſſible Kindneſs, will kindle our Love; and by all theſe, our Souls will be led Captive into eager deſires, and firm reſolutions, and be fully purpoſed to keep God's Laws, that ſo they may avoid that terrible Death which he threatens to the Breakers, and attain thoſe matchleſs Joys which he promiſes to the Obedient Keepers of them. And when once, by means of this Faith and Knowledge, God's Laws have gain'd both our Wills and Paſſions, which are the inward ſprings and cauſes of our Actions; they cannot fail (whilſt they keep the ſame,) of being obeyed in our Works and Actions too, which enſue upon thoſe cauſes, and are produced by them. But we ſhall quickly go on to perform what we reſolve, and to do what we deſire; and ſo in very deed to fulfil and obey them. Upon which account, of our Chriſtian Faith having ſo mighty an influence upon our Chriſtian and Obedient Practice, our Obedience it ſelf, as being the effect of it, and produced by it, is call'd *the Obedience of Faith*, Rom. 16. 26. And the Righteouſneſs which it exacts of us, and which it *c cooperates* to work in us, *the Righteouſneſs of Faith*, Gal. 5. 5. And our Chriſtian warfare or ſtriving againſt Sin, is called *the good fight of Faith*, 1 Tim. 6. 12. And becauſe in this conteſt our great ſuccours which protect us, and keep us from fainting, and at laſt make us victorious, are ſome points or

c Jam. 2. 22. *Συνήργει τοῖς ἔργοις.*

promises of our Religious belief; therefore it is styled a *Shield, and a Breast-plate of Faith*, 1 Thess. 5. 8. And S. *John* affirms plainly, *that this is the victory over the World, even our Faith*, 1 John 5. 4.

And for this reason it is, because our Faith and Knowledge are so powerful a cause and principle of our Obedience, that God speaks so great things of them, and has made such valuable promises to them. He never intends eternally to reward the Faith and Knowledge of our Minds, further than they *d* effect the Obedience of our Actions, and become an *Obedient Knowledge*, and a *e working Faith*. For when in the places mentioned, or in any other, God promises, that he who *knows Christ*, or *believes in Christ*, shall live; he speaks *metonymically*, and means Faith and Knowledge with this effect, of a working Service and Obedience.

d πνὸς χάριν ἐυλογήθη ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν Αβραάμ; ἐχ δικαιοσύνην ϗ ἀλήθειαν διὰ πίστεως ποίησας; Clem. Rom. Ep. 1. ad Cor. c. 31.

e *Quid est fideliter Christo credere? est fideliter Dei mandata servare.* Salvian. de Gub. l. 3. p. 67. Ed. Oxon. Αβραὰμ ὁ φίλος μεγαυχησυθεὶς πιστὸς ἐυρέθη, ἐν τῷ ὑπήκοον γενέσθαι τοῖς ῥήμασι τ̃ Θεῦ. Clem. Rom. 1. Ep. ad Cor. c. 10.

As for *knowledge*, 'tis plain that God accepts it no otherwise, than as it effects Obedience, nor can we any otherwise confide in it. *Hereby* alone, says S. *John*, *we know that we know him*, in that sense of knowledge whereto God has promised Life and Pardon, *if we keep his Commandments*. But *he that saith I know him, and* for all that *keepeth not his Commandments, he is a lyar, and the truth is not in him*, 1 John 2. 3, 4.

And then as for *Faith*, no man is interpreted to have that Faith, which is made the condition of our Pardon and Acceptance, but he who is acted by it, and in his Works is obedient thereto. *The Faith*, says S. *Paul*, *which in Christ Jesus* or the Christian Religion, *availeth any thing* to that *Righteousness* which all Christians *hope for*, is that only *which worketh by Love*, Gal. 5. 5, 6. It begins the change within, by *purifying of our Hearts* and Desires, *Acts* 15. 9. And thence goes on to perfect it in our outward Words and Actions. And unless it proceed to this, it will never be able to bear us out, and to justifie us at God's Bar: For there, as S. *James* tells us, *by our f works we must all be justified, and not by a Faith only*

f Mat. 25. 34, 35, 36, &c.

which

which works nothing, *Jam.* 2. 24. Such alas! will be wholly uſeleſs, and of no conſideration in that Court; it will not any way profit, and then certainly it cannot ſave us. For *what doth it profit, my Brethren, though a Man* be able to *ſay*, either here or hereafter, *he hath Faith, and hath not Works*; will that be allowed a ſufficient plea in God's Judgment? Or *ſhall* that *Faith ſave him?* Jam. 2. 14. This unworking Faith, is not that effectual Faith, which the Goſpel encourages, but its worthleſs ſhell and lifeleſs carcaſe. *For wilt thou know, O vain Man, that Faith without Works is dead? Even as the body without the ſpirit is dead, ſo Faith without Works is dead alſo*, ver. 20, 26. It is Faith only in an imperfect degree, and a weak unprofitable meaſure; for it is not arrived to a perfect pitch, or to that compleat ſtate, whereunto the Goſpel doth at preſent promiſe Life, and Chriſt will at the laſt Day award it, until it ſhews it ſelf in action, and our lives expreſs the power of it. *Our Father Abraham*, ſays S. *James, was juſtified by Works*, produced by Faith, *when*, in an unſtagger'd belief that God would make good his promiſe of a numerous iſſue by his Son *Iſaac*, though it were by *raiſing him up again from the* g *dead*, he would obey his command which ſeemed quite to overthrow it, and *offered up his Son upon the Altar. Seeſt thou how his Faith* in God's Power and Promiſe, *wrought*, prevalently over all oppoſition *h*, *to* the production of that *his* ſtrange *work*; and *by* this juſtifying *work* upon it, *was* his *Faith made perfect*, ver. 21, 22.

g *Heb.* 11. 17, 19.

h Συνήργει πῖς ἔργοις, wrought to his works, or to make him work.

So that when all is done, we ſee that there is no Life or Pardon promiſed, to any Faith or Knowledge, which are ſeparate from Obedience, but to ſuch only as co-operate to them, and imply them. There is no belief, wherewith our Judge at the laſt day will be ſatisfied, or wherein we are ſafe; which either he will accept, or we may truſt to, if our dutiful works are wanting. So that *this is*, and ever will be, as S. *Paul* ſays, *a faithful ſaying, and ſuch as every good Chriſtian Man ought conſtantly to receive* or affirm, *that they who* have Faith, or *have believed in God, be careful to maintain* Obedience and *good Works*, becauſe it is they which at the laſt day muſt do all Men good, *are good and profitable unto Men.* Tit. 3. 8.

Secondly, This condition of our acceptance, whereto the Goſpel promiſes a happy ſentence of Life and Pardon in the laſt Judgment, is ſometimes called, *being in Chriſt. There is no condemnation*, ſays S. *Paul, to them, who are in Chriſt Jeſus*, Rom. 8. 1.

The word *Chriſt*, we muſt know many times in Scripture ſignifies the *Religion* of Chriſt. Thus *the Law*, is ſaid to be *a Schoolmaſter to bring us to Chriſt, i. e.* the imperfect rule of the *Moſaick* Religion, was fitted for the minority of the World, and intended to train Men up, as Children are by School Diſcipline, for the more perfect and manly inſtitution of the Chriſtian, *Gal.* 3. 24. And thus we read of *Preaching Chriſt*, that is the Chriſtian Religion, *Phil.* 1. 15. And S. *Paul* tells the *Epheſians*, of their *learning Chriſt* and *hearing him, i. e.* his Goſpel and Doctrine. *Ye have not ſo learned Chriſt, if ſo be ye have heard him, and been taught by him*, or *i* in him, *Eph.* 4. 20, 21. *Heard him and been taught by him, i. e.* not by his *perſon*, for he never went beyond *Judea, being ſent*, as he ſaid, *to none but the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael*, Mat. 15. 24. And therefore never travelled ſo far as *Epheſus*; but by, and in his *Doctrine* or Religion. And this is a moſt uſual form of ſpeech, to call any *Inſtitution* or *Profeſſion* by the name of its *firſt Author*. The Doctrine and Religion, which was delivered to the *Jews* by *Moſes*, is called by his Name. For S. *Paul* ſpeaks of *Moſes being read, i. e.* the Law of *Moſes*, 2 *Cor.* 3. 15. And of the *Iſraelites* being *baptized into Moſes, i. e.* the *Moſaick* Religion, 1 *Cor.* 10. 2. And our Lord himſelf tells the *Jews* in the Parable of the Rich Man, that they *have Moſes and the Prophets*, and bids them *hear them*, *Luke* 6. 29. where he cannot mean their *Perſons*, in regard they were dead long before, and got without the reach of their hearing, but their *Writings and Religion*.

ἐν αὐτῷ ἐδιδάχθη-τε.

And as *Chriſt* many times ſignifies the *Chriſtian Religion*, ſo is *being in Chriſt*, the very ſame with *being of his Religion*, or *being a Chriſtian*. Thus S. *Paul* tells us of *Andronicus* and *Junia*, who embraced the Chriſtian Doctrine, whilſt he perſecuted and oppoſed it, that *they were in Chriſt, i. e.* in Chriſt's Religion, before him, *Rom.* 16. 7. They who died *in the Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Faith*, are ſaid to be *fallen aſleep in Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 15. 18. *The veil of Moſes is done away in Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 3. 14. *The veil*

veil of Moſes, i. e. types and obſcure ſhadows of the *Moſaical* Religion, are *done away in Chriſt, i. e.* by the plain clearneſs of the Chriſtian. Thus I knew a *Man in Chriſt*, is no more than I knew a *Chriſtian Man*, 2 Cor. 12. 2. And the *Churches of Judea in Chriſt*, are the very ſame as the *Chriſtian Churches among the Jews.* Gal. 1. 22. So when we read that *in Chriſt Jeſus neither Circumciſion availeth any thing, nor uncircumciſion, but a new Creature*, Gal. 6. 15. The meaning is only this, that what price ſoever the *Religion of Moſes* put upon this outward Rite of Circumciſion, and thoſe other Jewiſh obſervances whereof it was the federal undertaking: Yet the *Religion of Chriſt* doth not regard them at all, but that all which can avail us *in it* is only a new Creature. And to the ſame ſenſe S. *Peter* ſpeaks of *a good Converſation in Chriſt, i. e.* in Chriſt's Religion, 1 *Pet.* 3. 16. And to name no more inſtances in a caſe ſo evident, we read not only of Men, but likewiſe of Bonds *in Chriſt*; *i. e.* of Mens being bound for the Religion and Faith of Chriſt, *My bonds in Chriſt*, ſays S. *Paul, are manifeſt in all the Palace, and in all other places*, Phil. 1. 13.

Aut beſides the ſenſe of the words, our *being in Chriſt*, for our *being of the Chriſtian Religion*; there is another very near it, which it is pertinent to our preſent buſineſs to obſerve; and that is, our *being in the Chriſtian Church.* Thus S. *Paul* ſays, that *we being many Members, are* yet *one Body*, or Corporation *in Chriſt*, or in the Society and Church of Chriſtians, wherein we are *every one Members one of another*, Rom. 12. 5. And God's gathering together all particular Chriſtians ſcatter'd over the World, into *one Catholick Church or Society*, is called his *gathering together in one all things in Chriſt*, Eph. 1. 10. Thus our admiſſion *into Chriſt's Church* by *Baptiſm*, is called our being *engraffed or planted into him. We have been planted together*, ſays the Apoſtle, *in the likeneſs of his Death*; or in Baptiſmal immerſion, which is a repreſentation of Burial after Death, *Rom.* 6. 5.

As for our *Being in Chriſt* then, which ſets us beyond the reach of Danger and Condemnation, it is the ſame as our *being of the Chriſtian Religion*, and *Members of the Chriſtian Church.*

And this Communion and Memberſhip of Chriſt's Church, and profeſſion of his Religion, is a moſt ready

and effectual means to make Men practise and obey it. For to be in the Church of Christ, is to live under the more especial aid and influences of his Holy Spirit, and under the preaching of his Word, the solemn return of Holy Prayers, the Administration of Blessed Sacraments, the counsel and direction of wise Guides, the Authority of good examples, the Correction and Discipline of Church Governours, and all the other both inward and outward means and advantages of Grace and Obedience. And then the profession and owning of his Religion, if it be true and undissembled, implies our Faith and belief of it; which is the great and only expedient that Christ could think of, for the Reformation of a wicked World; and which, as we have already seen, is a most effectual means and sure Principle of good Life and Practice.

And because our *being in Christ, i. e.* our profession of Christ's Religion and Communion and Society with Christ's Church, is so powerful a Principle of our obedient Service; therefore has God promised to it that Life and Pardon, which is the inseparable reward of Obedience it self. He doth not in any wise intend, that every Man who bears the Name of Christ, and is of his retinue, that will make a bare profession of his Service in calling of him *Lord, Lord*, without any real works and performance, shall have right to these Rewards when he comes to Judgment. *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he only, who doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven*, Matt. 7. 21. Nay in the next verse he goes higher, *Many will say unto me in that day, Have we not prophesied in thy Name, and in thy Name cast out Devils, and in thy Name done many wondrous works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me*, you are no such [k] Christians as I own, for whatsoever your names and professions be, *ye* are of their number *that* in their Lives *works Iniquity*, verse. 22, 23. When God assures us by S. *Paul* therefore that there is *no Condemnation to them that are in Christ*, or in Christ's Church and Religion; he means to them that are so in them, as thereby to become obedient; he speaks metonymically, and implies our Works and Actions, as well as that Communion and profession which signifies them, and ought to produce them.

[k] *Nec Christianus esse videtur, qui Christiani nominis opus non agit.* Salvian de Gub. l. 4. p Ed. Ox. 96.

And

And in this, the Scriptures are express, *He that KEEPS his Commandments, dwells in Christ, and Christ in him,* says S. *John*, 1 Ep. 3. 24. It is nothing less than our fulfilling of his Laws, who is head of that body whereunto we join our selves as members, and obeying the Rules of that Holy Religion which we profess; that will at the last day be interpreted, for our *being in him* in such sort, as may qualifie us to be saved by him. *Whoso KEEPETH his word,* says the same Apostle, *in him is the love of God made perfect: and hereby,* by this perfection of love in Obedience, *we know that we are in him*: So that whosoever he be *that saith he abideth in him* he *ought himself also so to walk even as he walked,* 1 John 2. 5, 6.

The necessity of connexion between these two, *viz. being a member of Christ's Church, and a good Man*; between *professing of Christ's Religion, and obeying it*; was so evident, and so well known and allowed of in the first times of Christianity, that both were understood, when either was mentioned. To *put on Christ* in the Apostles days, was the same, as *to make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof*, Rom. 13. 14. And *to learn Christ*, was but another phrase, for *to put off concerning the former CONVERSATION the Old Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts*; *and to put on the New Man, which after* the similitude of *God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness*, Eph. 4. 20, 22, 24. A *Christian* and a *keeper of God's Laws*, were then only two words for the same thing. For they thought nothing could be a greater contradiction, than for a Man to profess himself a Servant of Christ, and yet to pay him no Obedience; to † *call him Lord, Lord, and not to do the things that he says*; to own the Name of a Christian, and yet to lead the life of a Heathen. *The time past of our Lives*, says S. *Peter*, or that time before we became Christians, *must suffice us* wherein *to have wrought the will of the Gentiles*, 1 Pet. 4. 3. But when once we have listed our selves in Christ's Service, and are *called upon by his Name*, we must renounce all our former ways, and *depart from all iniquity*, 2 Tim. 2. 19.

† *Luke* 6. 26.

So that in the language of those *first times*, and in the meaning of the *Holy Scriptures*, Mens *being in Christ*, is by no means separate from *Obedience*, but implies it. To

talk

talk of an *interest in him*, without *fulfilling of his Laws*, is but vain Cant and unprofitable Speech. It is to talk without Book, and to use a Scripture phrase, but against the Scriptures meaning. For at the last day, when Christ comes to expound his own Gospel, we shall hear him pronounce, what *it* has already in plain words declared to us, that no Man is savingly *in Christ* who is *out* with his Laws; but that he only is so *in him*, as to be secure from all Condemnation, who has *kept* his Commandments and faithfully *obey'd* him.

CHAP. III.

Of Pardon promised to Repentance.

THIRDLY, that condition which the Gospel exacts of us as the terms whereupon we must hope to find Life and Pardon at the last day, is oft-times called *Repentance, Regeneration, a new Creature, or a New Nature.* Christ's fore-runner, *John the Baptist*, came Preaching *Repentance for the Remission of Sins*, Luke 3. 3. And when Christ himself Commissions his Apostles to publish his Gospel over all the World, their instructions are, to *preach Repentance and Remission of Sins in his Name to all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem*, Luke 24. 47. And according to this order they practised. *Repent*, says S. *Peter* in his first Sermon *and be Baptized for the Remission of Sins*, Acts 2. 38. And again, *Repent that your Sins may be blotted out*, Acts 3. 19. And then as for *Regeneration, a New Creature, and a New Nature*; they are such qualifications as fit us for Eternal Life, and without which we shall never be admitted to it. It is, says our Saviour to *Nicodemus*, a Man's *being born again*, that must capacitate him to *enter into the Kingdom of God*, Joh. 3. 3. In *Christ Jesus*, or the Christian Religion saith S. *Paul, neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision, but a NEW CREATURE*, Gal. 6. 15. The condition required of all Men to Life and Pardon, as *the truth is in Jesus, is this, that they put off the OLD MAN*,

MAN, and be RENEWED in the Spirit of their mind; and that they put on the NEW MAN, which after the ſimilitude of *God, is Created in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs*, Eph. 4. 21, 22, 23, 24.

Repentance, in the conſtant and plain notion of the Holy Scriptures, is *ſuch a vertuous alteration of the mind and purpoſe, as begets a like vertuous change in the Life and Practice.* It begins in our *Thoughts and Reſolutions*, and is made perfect in our *Works and Actions*. It firſt caſts all falſe Principles and fooliſh Judgments, of the deſirableneſs of Sin, and the dreadfulneſs of Vertue; all Opinions that hinder a good Life, and encourage Wickedneſs; all inveigling Thoughts, and bewitching Imaginations; all firm purpoſes, and ſtudied contrivances of Evil, *out of our Minds*: And thereby purges all Wickedneſs and Diſobedience, *out of our Lives and Actions*.

It implies a change of *Mind*, and is well noted by the Greek * name for *Repentance*, which is very expreſſive of its nature. For it ſignifies an *alteration of the Mind*, or a *transformation of our Thoughts and Counſels*; and is the ſame, that S. *Paul* calls a being *renewed in the Spirit of our Mind*, Eph. 4. 23. And this God expreſly calls for, when he ſummons the Wicked to *Repentance*, Iſa. 55. *Let the Wicked Man forſake his Thoughts, and turn* them from his Sin *unto the Lord, and* then *he will have mercy upon him*, verſ. 7.

* μεταν̃οια.

It includes alſo an alteration of the † *Life and Practice*, or a *forbearing to repeat the Sin which we repent of*. And this is a natural effect of the former, in as much as our Works and Actions will ſtill go along with our ſtudies and contrivances, our purpoſes and reſolutions. Now this part of *Repentance* from Sin, *viz. a leaving* or *forſaking* of it, is its prime ingredient, and the chief thing which the Scriptures expreſs by it; it is the *main end*, whereto the former ſerves only as the *principle and inſtrument*. *Godly ſorrow*, or the grief and trouble of our minds for having offended God, *working*, as S. *Paul* ſays, that *Repentance*, which will never fail us, nor ever need

† μεταν̃οῶν ἐφ' οἷς ἔδλεξεν ὄκ ἔτι ποιεῖ, ἢ λέγει, βασανίζων ἢ ἐφ' οἷς ἥμαρτεν τὴν ἑαυτῆ ψυχὴν ἀγαθοεργεῖ. Clem. Alex. Strom. 2. p. 281. δόκησις μετανοίας, ἣ μετάνοια, τὸ πολλάκις αἰτιᾶσθαι συνγώμην ἐφ' οἷς πλημμελῆμεν πολλάκις. id. p. 212. ed. Lug.

need to be *repented of*, 2 Cor. 7. 10. And that Repentance includes this alteration of our lives, as well as that other of our Minds, the Scriptures plainly express to us, when they style it a *Repentance FROM dead works*, Heb. 6. 1. a *TURNING away from all Transgressions, and doing that which is lawful and right*, Ezek. 18. 27, 30. *A CONVERSION FROM darkness unto light*, Acts 26. 18. *A putting AWAY the evil of our DOINGS, by ceasing to DO Evil, and learning to DO well*, Isa. 1. 16, 17.

These *two* changes, a change of *Mind* and a change of *Practice*, make up the essence, and integrate the Nature of a saving Repentance. It implies first a change in our *Minds* and *Tempers*, and upon that a correspondent change in our *Lives and Actions*.

Now as for the former of these, this change of our *Minds* and *Tempers*, in *new Thoughts*, *new Counsels*, *new Desires* and *Resolutions*: This vertuous alteration both in our *Wills* and *Understandings*, which are those two powers that make up our *rational Nature*, is that which the Scriptures call our *new Nature*; the begetting of which in us, is called our † *Regeneration*, or our *being born again*. For the *Tempers* and *Inclinations* of our Souls, are usually in our common Discourse called our *Nature*. A Man of a *loving condescensive disposition*, is called a Man of a *good Nature*; and one of a *sowre revengeful Temper*, is called a Man of an *ill Nature*. And the *change* from one to the other, is called a *change* of Nature, a making of him a *new Creature*, and a *new Man*. And thus we are daily wont to say of any person, who, from wicked and sinful inclinations, is changed to a disposition which is vertuous and holy, that he is become a *new Man*. And as this is our language, so is it the language of the Holy Scriptures too. For our putting on the *Tempers and habitual Inclinations of Righteousness and true Holiness*, is called our putting on the *new Man*, Eph. 4. 24. The alteration, from an *unbelieving and uncharitable*, to a *believing loving Temper*, or to a *Faith that worketh by love*, S. *Paul* calls *a New Creature*. Gal. 5. 6. compared with *Chap. 6. vers.* 15. *And as for the Renovation* it self, it is called a *Regeneration* or *New Birth*; the *Author* of it, a *Father*; and the persons so *renewed*, his *Sons* or *Children*. All which are expressed to us by S. *John*,

† *Noah's* preaching Righteousness and Repentance before the flood, 2 *Pet.* 2. 5. and 1 *Pet.* 3. 20. is thus expressed by S. *Clem.* παλιγγενεσίαν ἐπήγγειλεν. 1 Epist. ad Cor. c. 9.

S. *John*, when he tells us of all thoſe who have received ſuch vertuous and holy diſpoſitions from God, as make them reſemble him and like unto him, that they are *the Sons of God*, 1 Joh. 3. 2. and *born of him*, 1 Joh. 5. 1, 4. In like manner, as the *Diſciples of the Prophets* among the *Jews*, becauſe they received thoſe qualifications from their inſtitution whereby they were made like unto them, are uſually in the Old Teſtament called * *Sons of the Prophets*.

**Prophetarum Filii.* And in the like ſenſe among the Gentiles, *Poetarum Filii.*

Now this firſt part of Repentance, or this *inward change of mind and purpoſe*, which is called a *New Creature*, and a *New Nature*; is a moſt direct cauſe and natural Author, of *a like change in our outward Works*, and of an *Obedient Service*. For it cuts off the very root of all Tranſgreſſion, and plants that of Obedience inſtead of it. It makes us now in obeying, to follow our own temper and inclination; and our doing of God's Will, to become our deſire, as well as it is our Duty. So that now when we perform God's Commands, we do nothing more than follow the natural tendencies of our own Souls; our Duty is become our choice and delight, and it is not without pains and difficulty that we can either omit or tranſgreſs it. For it is an equal force and violence, to a *Renewed* and *Obedient Nature*, to act Sin; as it is for a *Wicked and Debauched* one, to work Obedience. He whoſe nature carries him on to *Love* and *Pity*, can as hardly be *Rigorous* and *Cruel*; as he, on the contrary, can abſtain from *Cruelty*, whoſe Nature is *Harſh* and *Revengeful*. To act *againſt* Nature any way, is not without difficulty; and to *follow* it, is always eaſie. And if it be changed from Sin and Diſobedience, to Obedience and Holineſs; it is then as truly a *ſelf-denial* to tranſgreſs, as it was before to obey. Nay, if this alteration gets up to a full growth, and Obedience become *perfectly* our Nature; it is then not only *uneaſie*, but even almoſt *impoſſible* to ſin againſt it. For then we ſhall be arrived to that pitch, which S. *John*'s words expreſs, when he ſays, that *he who is born of God*, or formed into this new Nature which makes him like unto, and comes from God, *CANNOT Sin*, 1 Joh. 3. 9.

So that if Obedience has got this hank of us, if by this *firſt part of Repentance, or this new Nature*, it be ingrafted in our tempers and inclinations, and become the employment

employment of our Thoughts, the desire of our Hearts, and the matter of our firm Purposes and Resolutions; whilst this state lasts, it cannot miss of our Works and Actions. It has won the Principles which command them; so that nothing more is needful to be done towards their procurement, but they will be sure to follow after them.

Now because *Repentance* in its whole Nature implies Obedience, as its chief ingredient; and because the first part of it, *viz.* a *change of Mind*, which is called a *New Nature*, or a *New Creature*, is so natural a Principle, and so powerful a cause to work and effect it: Therefore, and upon no other reason, doth God in the Holy Scriptures so far encourage them. He means not in any wise at the last day, to quit and reward Men upon such *Repentance* and *New Birth*, as is void of *obedient Works and Actions*; and upon such only, as *include* or *effect* them.

'Tis true, indeed the *Wicked* and *Disobedient*, who will not *Reform* and *Obey*, but would notwithstanding have *right* to Life and Pardon, call something else *Repentance*, which is void of all *Amendment* and *Obedience*. If they *confess their Sin*, and are *sad upon it*, if they *wring their Hands, and beat their Breasts*, and then, *giving it hard Names and Reproachful Titles, beg God to forgive them*; they think that they have done an acceptable Service, and *sufficiently repented* of it. They take no care to *keep off* from it, provided they continue to *bewail* and *confess* it. For although they bring in before God *large Catalogues* of Sins, yet they never *strive* to *lessen* them. But when they profess to him, how they have *deserved* his Wrath and Eternal Judgment, they want nothing but opportunity still further to *provoke* the same. When they acknowledge how *vilely* they have *affronted* him in the breach of his Laws, they are still ready to *repeat* their Breaches thereof. All the hard names which they give their Sins, are false and forced Expressions, they mean no hurt to them all the while. For although they *revile* them in their words, yet they *Honour* and *Applaud* them in their Practice. They are still in love with them at their next meeting, and for all the ill language which they gave them when they spake of them before God, they will embrace them upon the first occasion, and repeat them upon every return of Temptation.

But

But can any conſiderate Man think, that ſuch a Repentance as this ſhall avail him before God, and ſave him from periſhing when Chriſt comes to judgment? Surely he muſt know nothing, either of *God's Nature*, or of his *Word*, who can be impoſed upon ſo groſly. For God by the neceſſity of his very *Nature*, perfectly hates all Sin, and ſo can never be reconciled to any Man barely for *telling* him that he is a Sinner. To inform him only that we have rebell'd againſt him, is to acquaint him, that we are his Enemies, whom, to vindicate himſelf, and the Authority of his Government, he ſhould deſtroy and ruin, not cheriſh and protect. The *Goſpel* declares that he will take ſevere and endleſs vengeance on all, who die Unreformed, and finally Diſobedient: And then to *own* our Diſobedience to his *Face*, without a true turn and a firm purpoſe of Reformation, is to *bid* him maintain his Law and execute his Sentence; to *provoke* Juſtice, and not to *appeaſe* it; to *haſten* and *aſſure* our Miſery, but by no means to *prevent* or *retard* it.

But that *Repentance*, whereupon God will Pardon us, and that *Regeneration* which he will eternally Reward, is ſuch only, as I ſaid, as either *includes* or *ends* in Obedience and Reformation. When he graciouſly proclaims, that *whoſoever repenteth him of his former Sins, and is born again, ſhall be ſaved*; he means, whoſoever doth the one, and is the other, and *obeys* with them. His ſpeech is *metonymical*, he intends Obedience, and the thing implies it, although his words do not expreſs it. For all the while, it is only a *Repentance* which is *Obedient*, and a *New Nature* that is *Operative*, which in the laſt Judgment he will eternally reward, and pronounce for ever Bleſſed.

For of *Repentance* he tells us plainly, that when he promiſes Life and Pardon to it, he means this Promiſe only of ſuch Repentance, as implies a *forſaking* of thoſe Sins, which we repent of, *in our Works and Actions*. It is a *Repentance FROM dead Works*, Heb. 6. 1. A *forbearing* to act that, which with our own Mouths we confeſs to be Evil. *They repented not*, ſays he, *of the works of their Hands*, in making and worſhipping Idols, *that they ſhould not ANY LONGER worſhip them*, Rev. 9 20. And becauſe it includes a *turn*, and a change of our Works and Actions, from Sin to Obedience; therefore

* Jer. 8. 2. So S. *Clement* uses the words ἐπιστροφὴ and μετάνοια promiscuously. μετανοίας τόπον ἔδωκεν ὁ δεσπότης τοῖς βουλομένοις ἐπιστρέφειν ἐπ' αὐτόν. And what in the Septuagint, whom he follows in Citations, is expressed by ἀποστρέψαι, *Ezek.* 33. 11. βούλομαι θάνατον ἀσεβοῦς ὡς ἀποστρέψαι, &c. He, giving the sense, though not the words, according to the Apostolical usage, expresses thus,—— ὁ βούλεται θάνατον ἁμαρτόλου ὡς μετάνοιαν, Clem. Rom. 1. Ep. ad Cor. c. 7, 8. And agreeable to this, the compilers of our Liturgy in the Sentences before Morning Service in our old Common Prayer Books, translate *Matt.* 3. 2. *Repent ye, for the Kingdom of God is at hand*; thus—*Amend your lives, for the Kingdom*, &c. As on the other side, they expound, *Ezek.* 18. 21. *If the wicked turn from all his Sins that he hath committed, and keep all my Statutes, and do that which is lawful and right*, &c. Thus —— *At what time soever a Sinner repenteth*, &c. And S. *Paul* calls his Preaching *Repentance*, his being *obedient to the Heavenly Vision*, which bad him go *turn Men from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God*, Acts. 26. 17, 18, 19, 20.

Repent and TURN to God, and do works meet for Repentance, Acts 26. 20. *Repent and turn from all your Transgressions, and so iniquity shall not be your ruin*, Ezek. 18. 30. For it is only *when the wicked Man TURNETH away from his wickedness that he hath committed*, and in his works *DOTH that which is lawful and right, that he shall save his Soul alive*, vers. 27.

Let no Man therefore think, that he ever *savingly repents* of any *damning Sin*, so long as he *perseveres to practice and repeat* it. His repentance must *deliver him from Sin*, before it *rescue* him from *Suffering*; for 'tis then only, *when the wicked Man forsakes his way, and returns unto the Lord, that God will have mercy upon him, and abundantly pardon*, Isa. 55. 7.

And as for that *part of Repentance*, viz. *Regeneration, a New Nature, or a New Creature*; God tells us plainly, that he accepts of them no further, than they are Principles of a New Service, or than we obey with them. The *New Creature* in Christ's Religion, is a being *Created*, as S. *Paul* speaks, *unto good WORKS, which God hath before ordained for us that we should walk in them*, Eph. 2. 10. It is our *Actions*, which must evidence our *Nature*: the *Tree*, says our Saviour, *is known by its Fruits*; so that we must either *make the Fruit good as well as the Tree is good*, or, *if the Fruit be evil, the Tree will be known to be so too*, Matt. 12. 33. *For do Men gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs*

Figs of Thistles? Even so a good Tree CANNOT *bring forth evil fruit, neither* CAN *a corrupt Tree bring forth good fruit: by their fruits therefore you shall know them,* Matt. 7. 16, 17, 18. Nothing less than a *good life*, will be allowed, either by *God* or *Men*, for a sufficient proof of a *good heart*; nor any thing below a *new Conversation* and Obedience, will pass for a good evidence of a *new Nature. Doth a Fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter*, says S. *James*; *can the Fig-tree bear Olive-berries, or a Vine Figs? Who is a wise Man, and endued with Knowledge among you? Let* HIM *shew out of a good* CONVERSATION *his works with meekness, of wisdom*, James 3. 11, 12, 13.

Let no Man then dare to think himself *regenerate*, and *born* of *God*, so long as he is *Disobedient*, and his *Works* are *Sinful. For whosoever is born of God doth not* COMMIT *sin, because his Seed*, his new Nature, *remaineth in him; and*, through the determining power and strength of that, he is almost come to this pass, that he *cannot sin*, *i. e.* it is become the bent of his Nature to do otherwise, *he is born of God*, Joh. 3. 9. And therefore if any Man would pass a true judgment upon his Nature, whether it be the *New* or *Old* Man; from *God*, or from the *Devil*; let him consult his Works and Actions, those undissembling effects of it, and from thence he may have a sure evidence which will not deceive him. *For in this*, as S. *John* goes on in the next words, *is manifested who are Children of God, and who are Children of the Devil; whosoever* DOTH *not Righteousness is not of God*, v. 10.

So that when Christ comes to judge us according to his Gospel, we see plainly, that no *Repentance* will bear us out, nor any pretended *Regeneration* or *new Nature* avail us unto life, but that only, which either implies, or ends in our Obedience. For no Man can with any show of reason hope to be acquitted and rewarded at that Bar, but he who *repents unto amendment*, who is *Cretated unto good Works*, and *is born again to a new Practice and Obedience.*

One case indeed there is, wherein a *new birth* will save a Man without a *new practice*; and that is, *when a Man is forthwith called away upon the change, before any opportunities of action come.* Some Men are listed into God's Service late, at the *eleventh hour of the day*, Matt. 20. 6.

They have just time to become Obedient, in *Will* and *Purpose*, but not in *Life* and *Practice*; they have no leisure left them to work in, but the Night comes suddenly upon them, when all the time of labour is at an end. And this is the case of all *dying Penitents*.

And here indeed, the *Will* shall be accepted for the *Deed*. For in Heart and Mind, such Penitents are become God's honest Servants; their desires are in great strength, and their inward purposes are come up to effectual degrees, which want nothing but time wherein to shew themselves, and are sufficient, whensoever an opportunity should occur, to beget a change of life, and to make their actions answer them. So that if they are destitute of an entire Obedience, and have not as yet evidenced their change of Nature in their change of Practice; that is not for want of *inward readiness*, but of *outward opportunities*; and therefore it is not so much their *fault* as their *unhappiness*. And when God sees it is thus with them, he takes the inward will and choice, for the outward service and performance. He judges us by our wills, which are in our own power; and not by chance and accidental opportunities, which are utterly without it. This he doth in evil Actions, as shall be shewn afterwards: The Will in them is taken for the Deed, and if once our Hearts are effectually resolved, and fully set upon them, in his account we are guilty of them, though by some intervening accidents we are hindred from committing them. And since as S. *Bernard* * argues undeniably in this matter, he is much more prone to pity than he is to punish, and had far rather interpret things to our profit than to our prejudice: We may be sure, that our Obedient purposes shall have as much force with him to the full as our disobedient have, and that an effectual Will in them, when nothing but time is wanting to perform in, shall pass for the Deed likewise. God is by no means forward to seek our hurt, and to take advantages of our Necessities; but in this, and in all other cases, where there is first an *effectually willing Mind*, and nothing but opportunity is wanting

* *Quid planius, quam quod voluntas pro facto reputetur, ubi factum excludit necessitas? nisi forte putetur in malo, quam in bono efficacior inveniri voluntas apud Deum, qui Charitas est; & promptior esset ad ulciscendum, quam ad remunerandum misericors & miserator Dominus.* Bernard Ep. ad Hugonem de Sancto Victore, quæ est Ep. 77. p. op. 1458.

ing to an anſwerable Practice, he takes, as S. *Paul* ſays, the Will for the Deed, and *accepts Men according to that* ſufficient and effectual deſire which *they have*; *and not according to that* outward performance, which through ſome unhappy and preventing accidents, *they have not*, 2 Cor. 8. 12.

And of this we have a clear inſtance, in one *dying Penitent*, the *Thief upon the Croſs*. His return was late indeed, he begun not to befit himſelf for the next World, till he was in his departure out of this. His converſion was in his very laſt hour, under the pangs of Death, and at the inſtant of Execution. But when our Saviour Chriſt ſaw, that his change of Heart was *true*, *full*, and *ſufficient*; and needed nothing but opportunity to ſhew it ſelf *effectual*: He tells him that it ſhould ſerve his turn, and ſecure his everlaſting Peace and Happineſs. Becauſe he would have been Obedient in his Practice if he had lived to it, he ſhall be rewarded at the laſt day as if he had been ſo. For *this very day*, ſaith he, *ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe*, Luk. 23. 42.

Thus available, I ſay, a *new Nature*, and an *inward Change* is, although it want an outward Practice, when it is *ſufficient* and *effectual* to produce it, and would *certainly effect it*, if there were but *time* and *opportunity allowed for it*.

But then here is the *dangerous* ſtate and deplorable caſe of all ſuch dying Penitents, that 'tis twenty to one, if they defer Repentance to their Death-Bed, that all the change which then appears in them, is not ſo *ſufficient*, nor would prove ſo effectual, were there a due time allow'd for the tryal thereof. And of this we have a clear Argument, in that among all the *Holy Vows* and *Pious Purpoſes*, which are begun by Men upon a *Sick-Bed*, when they are in ſight of Death and expect a Diſſolution; there are ſo few that continue with them, and prove *effectual* to make their Lives and Actions anſwer them, when they *recover*. There is not, I believe, one unconverted Chriſtian in ſome hundreds, but will ſhew ſome ſigns of ſorrow, and put up devout Prayers, and make holy Vows and Purpoſes, when he apprehends himſelf about to die: And yet of all them, who are raiſed up again, 'tis a very ſmall and inconſiderable number in Compariſon, that make good thoſe Vows, and effect what they

had reſolved upon. And now, if theſe Men had died when they thus repented, in what a miſerable ſtate had they been? For this change in their *Will* and *Purpoſe*, is no further *available* to their everlaſting *Salvation*, than it would be *effectual* to work a like change in their *Lives* and *Practice*. God accepts the *Holineſs* of the *Mind*, only as it is an *Holy Principle*; and imputes the *Reward* of *Obedience* to it no farther, than he forſees, that, if he allow'd time, *Obedience* would *enſue* upon it. The *Will* is never taken for the *Deed*, but when it is able to *effect* the ſame, when the Deed would be ſure to follow ſo ſoon as an opportunity were offered for it. And this God ſees beforehand, although we do not: He is able to judge of the ſincerity of Men's Deſires, and of the ſufficiency of their Purpoſes, before their following Works declare them. And according to what he foreſees they would afterwards effect; he either accepts or rejects them. But when Men's after-works come as a clear evidence, of the inſincerity, or inſufficiency of their Sick-Bed Reſolutions, they may ſee plainly themſelves, what God ſaw long before, that all the change of Mind, which was *then* wrought in them, was utterly inſignificant and unavailing. When they truſted to it, they relyed upon a broken Reed; their Confidence upon it was ill grounded, and if they had died with it, would moſt certainly have deceived them.

Thus utterly uncertain and uncomfortable a thing is a mere unworking change, and a late Death-Bed Repentance. It may *ſometimes* prove ſufficient to beget an after-change of Practice, and when God ſees it would, I doubt not but he will accept it. But it very ſeldom doth, and no Man who dies in it can poſſibly tell whether it would or no. It is very great odds, that it would prove too weak; ſo that although there be *ſome*, yet is there very ſmall hope, that any dying Man can place in it.

And that which renders it ordinarily ſo inſufficient, and thereupon ſo uncertain and uncomfortable, is either,

Firſt, Becauſe it generally proceeds from an *unconſtant, temporary Principle*: Or,

Secondly, Becauſe, when the *Principle is genuine and laſting*, it is ſtill too *weak*, and *in an incompetent meaſure* and *degree*.

1. That

1. That penitential grief and change of mind which is wrought upon a Death-Bed, is ordinarily ineffective, and inſufficient to produce a *conſtant* change of Life and Practice, becauſe it *generally* proceeds from an *inconſtant and temporary principle*. It is commonly founded upon a reaſon, that doth not hold in all times; a reaſon, that is good in Sickneſs, but not in Health; that concludes for a Pious change whilſt we are under our Sick-Bed ſorrows, but not when being freed from them, we are placed again under the pleaſure of temptations.

For the great and general motive, which makes all thoſe who never thought of reforming in all their lives before, to reſolve upon it when they are on their Death-Bed; is plainly the *nearneſs* of the next World, and their apprehenſion of their *ſudden death* and departure. Could they hope to live longer, they would ſin ſtill. But they look upon themſelves as going to Judgment, and they have ſo much Conſcience left in them, as to believe that there is a Hell for the impenitent; and their own ſelf-love is extreamly ſtartled at that, and makes them run to any ſhelter: So that they make many fearful confeſſions, and fervent Prayers, and holy purpoſes, and ſay and do any thing whereby they may quiet their preſent fears, and catch at any comfortable hopes of avoiding the Eternal torments which they are afraid of. The ordinary cauſe then of all this work, is not any *love* of God, or *hatred* of Sin; but only a *fear* of Puniſhment. And that too, not a *fear* of it at a *diſtance*, and as at ſome removes from them: but only as it looks *near* at hand, and juſt hanging over them.

But now, as for this apparent *nearneſs* of Death and this *confounding* fear upon it; it is plainly a *ſhort* and *tranſient*, and *unconſtant*, *temporary* Principle. It is a reaſon to them no longer, than they are *ſick*; for when they *recover* and are well again, Death is as *far* off, and they are become again as fearleſs as ever. They are got out of its neighbourhood, and it gives them no further trouble: So that all their former fears abate, and their vertuous reſolutions fall, as beginning now to want that which firſt gave life to them, and ſhould ſupport them. And now, when opportunities of Sin are offered, and the pleaſurable baits of Temptations invite; they have nothing left that is able to reſiſt them. Whilſt they were *ſick*, they

were not *capable* to be tempted; and then Death being *near*, it enabled them to purpose well, and to make a pious resolution. But now, since they are *well*, Temptations are become as strong as ever; and the thoughts of Death being *far* removed, they have no resolutions that can withstand them, but are quickly changed again into the same Men, as *sensual* and *sinful* as they were before.

Indeed it sometimes happens, that those Souls, which were at first awakened by such a *transient, temporary* motive; go on to others afterwards, that are more *fixt* and *lasting*: And then they are furnished with Armour in all times, and have a motive that may bear them out when Death is *far* off, as well as when 'tis near at hand; in time of Health, as well as in time of Sickness. For they who were at first affrighted into a change of Mind and holy Purposes, by the near approach of Death and Judgment, go on sometimes to confirm their Resolutions upon more lasting Principles. They think themselves into a deep sense, *of that base ingratitude towards God and our dearest Saviour, which is in Sin, and of its mischievousness to their own selves; how it robs them of all that Eternal Good which their Hearts desire, and brings them under all those insupportable and endless Evils which they fear: All which it doth for the purchase of some light, empty, and transient Pleasures, which are vastly below the Joys of Heaven; and for the avoidance of some short pain and uneasiness, which are infinitely nothing in comparison of the Pains of Hell.* And these thoughts give them a firm and lasting conviction of the utter necessity of renouncing all evil Courses, which are so destructive; and of leading a Holy and Obedient Life, which are so infinitely becoming them, and beneficial to them.

And this conviction now, can *beget*, and *preserve* a Resolution, that is sufficient and effectual, victorious and prevailing. It will be a reason to them to resolve and practise at all times, in Sickness and in Health; when they are not tempted, and also when they are. For Heaven and the Love of God, is always a necessary end; and their Obedience is always a necessary means or instrument. So that if Men resolve upon a conviction of this necessity, they resolve upon a reason that may well hold always. They will constantly have the highest rea-

son

ſon to be ſo convinced; and ſtill to repeat and fortifie their Reſolution upon ſuch conviction; and to Act and Practiſe that which they have ſo wiſely reſolved to Practiſe. And when a Sick Man's change is built upon this ground, and proceeds upon this motive; it may be permanent and fixt, effectual and prevailing. As it is in all thoſe, who are Converted by Sickneſs and Afflictions, that *great*, and uſually *laſt* means, which God makes uſe of for the reclaiming of ſinful Men.

But generally Men's Sick-Bed purpoſes, go no further than the *firſt* ground. They *always* begin upon the fears of preſent Death, and the near approach of Judgment; and though *ſometimes* they go higher ſtill, yet *ordinarily* they reſt there; ſo that they have no change longer than their Sickneſs laſts. And this *Repentance*, is certainly *inſufficient*; this *Will* can never be accepted for the *Deed*; becauſe if they were allow'd to recover again, and to live on till an opportunity of Doing came, the good-will and purpoſe would be quite loſt in the time of tryal, and able to effect nothing.

But although a Death-Bed change ſhould proceed upon both theſe grounds, and the Dying Men ſhould reſolve to amend, both *upon the ſenſe of ſudden Death*, which will maintain their reſolution ſo long as it is near, and alſo *upon a conviction of the abſolute neceſſity of Heaven and an Holy Life*, which may make them reſolve ſtill when the preſent danger is over: Yet may their Repentance after all be inſufficient and avail nothing. For a Death-Bed Repentance, when it doth proceed upon a *genuine and laſting* motive, is ſtill oft-times ineffectual, becauſe the *change* is.

2. In too *weak*, and *incompetent a meaſure and degree*. It is not every degree, even of *true* and *undiſſembled* Reſolution, that will overcome a Man's Luſts, and ſtrengthen him to ſuch a pitch, as to mak him prevail over all Temptations. A thouſand good reſolutions go to Hell, becauſe, although they are *ſincere* and *true*, yet they are *weak* and *ineffectual*. For how many Men are there, who reſolve againſt their Sins, who do not yet get quit of them? They purpoſe to leave them, but for all that they live ſtill in them; their Mind and Will is againſt them, but yet they continue to work and practiſe them. When once Men have got *violent Luſts*, and *vicious Habits*, and

Sin by a *long use* is become almost a *second Nature* to them: It is not every *measure*, no not every *moderate degree* of Resolution, that can mortifie and overcome them. For a *weak* Resolution is quickly overthrown; Men's Lusts are too hard for it, and quite overbear it. It may make some resistance, create some trouble, and cause some delay; but that is all that it can do: It can only contend and struggle, but it is not able to overcome.

This is plain from every Religious Man's Experience. And this S. *Paul* sets down expressly, in his Character of the † *unregenerate striver*, in the *seventh* Chapter of the *Epistle* to the *Romans*. For there was a real change in his *Mind*, without a change in his *Practice*; a *Resolution* without *Effect*, and a *Will* without *Performance*: The *violence of his Lusts* was too hard for the *conviction of his Conscience*, and led him Captive, even against his *Will*, into a course of Sin and Disobedience. *With the MIND*, says he, *I serve the Law of God, but with the FLESH the Law of Sin, ver. 25. What I DO, I ALLOW not; for what I WOULD, that I DO not; but what I HATE, that I DO*, ver. 15, 19. *To WILL is present with me, but how to PERFORM that which is good I find not*, ver. 18. *For the Law of my MEMBERS wars against the Law of my MIND, and brings me into CAPTIVITY to the Law of Sin*, ver. 23.

† See b. 3. c. 4.

Thus weak and unable, ineffective and idle, are many true and real Resolutions. They have not strength enough to do their work; the opposition is greater than they can overcome; so that they are able to make no alteration, but for all this *change of Mind*, Men will continue Wicked and Disobedient in their *Practice* still.

And of this sort *generally*, even when they proceed upon a *genuine* and *lasting* motive, are the Penitential purposes of Dying-Men. For, alas! when Men have lived all their Lives in a course of Sin, and their Minds have been always taken up with it, and their Hearts wholly enslaved to it: It is no easie matter to bring them off, and to fill them with such firmness of purpose, and strength of pious Resolution, as would be able effectually to mortifie and subdue it. This is a most laborious work, and a difficult undertaking. It requires much *time*, and the *freedom* of all our Faculties.

For

For how hard a thing is it, even for Men in *Health*, when their *Thoughts are free, diſtracted by no buſineſs, incorrupted by no pain, and diſturbed by no diſeaſe or other hindrance*, to work themſelves up to an effectual and prevailing Reſolution againſt *any one* Sin, which they have been habitually inured, and for a long time enſlaved to? And even of them who do at laſt *effectually* reſolve againſt it, how few are there who come to ſuch a pitch of Reſolution at the *firſt tryal*? No, their proceeding is *gradual*, they go on from ſtep to ſtep; every following Reſolution is more firm, and ſtronger than that which went before; till after ſeveral Repetitions and Advances, they arrive at laſt to a degree and pitch of holy purpoſe ſo *compleat*, as can *effect* that vertuous change of *Life* and *Action* which they aim at. So that their *Spiritual* Life, is not brought on to perfection in a moment, more than their *Natural*; but requires much *Time*, and much *Exerciſe*: For as their ſinful Habits were not at firſt *acquired*, ſo neither are they to be *conquered* by one Action, but by *many*.

And ſince the proceſs in Repentance, even from *one ſingle* Sin, is ſo *long* and tedious e'er it has arrived to a *ſaving* pitch, and ſo difficult to a *healthy* Man, who has nothing to *trouble* and *diſtract* him: What muſt an *Univerſal Reformation* be, to a *Dying* Perſon, whoſe time is *ſhort*, and much *diſturbed*; who cannot repeat *many* Reſolutions, nor make a tryal of the force and power of *any one*, and who is moſt likely to be *weak* and *languid* in all thoſe good purpoſes which he makes, by reaſon that his *Thoughts are heavy, and his Attention broken, and all his Faculties are oppreſſed with Pain, and become weary and unactive through a waſting Diſeaſe*? Surely if the *firſt Reſolutions of Healthy Men*, are *generally* ſo ineffective and inſufficient; theſe purpoſes of *Dying Penitents*, which in all *advantages* for a *ſtrong* and *prevailing* Reſolution fall much *below* them, muſt needs be generally of this ineffective ſort too.

And when they are ſo, they will not paſs in God's account, but are *utterly unavailable* to any Man's *Salvation*: A Man who only *purpoſeth*, but doth not *practiſe*; who barely *wills*, but is not able to perform; is in the *way to life* indeed, but he is far from having yet *attained* to it. He is ſtill in a ſad caſe, and under a *damning* Sentence.

For

For he is, as S. *Paul* says in that *seventh* Chapter to the *Romans*, where he describes him, *slain by Sin*, v. 11. It *works Death in him*, v. 13. he is yet under, as the *Law of Sin*, so *the body of Death* too, v. 24. But the change of *Mind* which God requires of us, is such as works a change of *Practice*. If he sees it *sufficient* to effect that, he will graciously accept it indeed before the effect follows. But if it be only an *impotent* and *ineffective* Will, and he discerns plainly that no Obedient Works would *follow* it: It is no such *Will* as he accepts for the *Deed*, and as for such Penitents, they must not expect that he will absolve, but utterly condemn them.

And since the change of Mind and Penitential purposes of *Dying* Persons, even when they are upon *genuine* and *lasting* grounds, so as in the following parts of a Man's Life, if God should please to spare him, they would do *something*; would yet be *weak* and *insufficient*, and so unable to do *enough*: There is still a further reason of the *ordinary* insufficiency of such Repentance, and why those *Dying* Men will not *ordinarily* be saved by it, but perish notwithstanding it.

To conclude this point then, we see that 'tis *possible* for such *New Birth* to save a Man, as has not yet produced a *New Practice*; and for Dying Penitents to be accepted upon a *change of Mind*, without a like *change of Life and Actions*. This I say *is possible*, it *sometimes* is, and sometimes has been done: But this indeed is very *rare* and *seldom*, so that no Man in his sober wits, who has time before him, will dare to trust to it. And the Sum of all is this, That to Men who are so unhappy as to be brought into that condition, it has, as is expressed in * *Salvian's* Disquisition, just *so much hope*, as may excite a good endeavour: But to Men who are yet out of it, it is *altogether so desperate*, as utterly to discourage all delay.

* *Quid dicam nescio, quid promittam ignoro; revocare ab inquisitione ultimi remedii periclitantes, durum & impium; spondere autem aliquid in tam fera cautione, temerarium.* Salv. de Avaritia, l. 1. p. 363. Ed. Oxon.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of Pardon promised to Confession of Sins, and to Conversion.

Fourthly, That condition of Life and Pardon, which the Gospel indispensibly exacts of us, and whereupon at the last day Christ will accept and reward us, is sometimes called *Confession* of our Sins to God. When we acknowledge them, God will be sure to pardon them; he has engaged his word and faithfulness for it, and so cannot recede from it: *If we* * *confess our Sins*, says S. *John*, *God is just and FAITHFUL to forgive us our Sins*, 1 Joh. 1. 9. * Luk. 26, 40, 42.

Now as for this *Confession* of our Sin, whereupon God promises mercifully to forgive them, it is not a bare *naming* of them, or giving in an *Historical Catalogue* of them to Almighty God, that he may *know* them and be informed of them. For he sees all our thoughts afar off, and our actions long before. We cannot inform him, when we lay open our transgressions before him; for we could never find any place wherein to act them so retired, but it was under his eye; nor any time and circumstances so secret, as to escape his knowledge. So that our Confession cannot be to *instruct him*, but only to *shame*, and to *humble*, and to work other effects in our *own selves*. And therefore it must not be a bare *recital* of such offences, as we have committed; but an acknowledgment *duly qualified*, and accompanied with such *tempers* of mind, as will lead us on to *forsake* and *amend* them.

It is a Confessing of them with *shame*, with an humble debasement, and sense of our unworthiness, who could ever be so vile as to be guilty of them. And such was *Ezra*'s Confession, *Ezra* 9. *O my God*, saith he, *I am ASHAMED and blush to lift up my face to thee my God, for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespasses are grown up unto the Heavens*, v. 6.

It is an acknowledgement of them with *hatred* and *detestation*, as things that are utterly *odious* and *loathsome* to us, which therefore we are prone to *fly from*, as from what is most *offensive*. And such is that Confession, whereunto God

God directs the *Jews* by his Prophet *Ezekiel*. *Ye shall remember your ways*, saith he, *and all your doings wherein ye have been defiled; and ye shall LOATH your selves in your own sight, for all your evils that you have committed*, Ezekiel 20. 43.

It is a recital of them with *sorrow* of mind, and a *troubled heart*; with such *pain*, as we use to feel in things which heavily *afflict* us: Which therefore we are forward *to avoid*, as what creates us smart and torment. And such was that of S. *Peter*, who when he *remembred*, and made mention of his Sin to God, *wept*, saith the Text, *bitterly*, Mat. 26. 75. And of *David*, who tells us in the 38 *Psal.* that when he *declares* to God *his iniquity*, he will *be SORRY* for his Sin, *v.* 18.

It is a Confession of them with a *resolution*, upon all this shame and sorrow which we have undergone for the same, never more to be reconciled to them, or to repeat, and act them over again. A Confession of the *mouth*, that is accompanied with a *turn* and change of the *heart*, which is now set as much against them, as formerly it was inclined to them. And such was that Confession, which Wise *Solomon* durst recommend to God's mercy, and beg him to accept of for mens Pardon and Forgiveness. *If they Repent*, saith he, *and say, we have done perversly, we have committed wickedness: And so RETURN unto thee with all their hearts, and all their soul: Then hear their prayer, and forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed*, 1 Kings 8. 47, 48, 49, 50.

It is such an acknowledgment of our Sins, lastly, as *undoes*, so far as is possible, all that which we had *done wickedly*; and makes all just, and sufficient recompence, and *satisfaction* for them. And this is that acknowledgment of all Sins of injustice, which God himself prescribes. *When a Man or Woman*, saith he, *shall commit any sin* of injury and wrong, *that men commit* one against another, *to do a trespass* thereby *against the Lord, and that person be guilty: Then shall they confess their Sin that they have done, and shall RECOMPENCE their Trespass with the principal thereof*, or the thing it self which they took away wrongfully, *and shall add* moreover *unto it a fifth part* more *thereof, and give it unto him against whom they trespassed*, Numb. 5. 6, 7.

Now

Now a Confeſſion of our Sins thus *qualified, viz.* a Confeſſion of them, *with bluſhing and being aſhamed of them, with an implacable hatred and loathing indignation of them, with bitter ſorrow for them, with firm purpoſe and reſolution againſt them, and with all poſſible endeavours to undo them by making juſt recompence and ſatisfaction*; A Confeſſion, I ſay, thus attended, is a moſt natural cauſe, and powerful principle, of our *leaving* and *forſaking* them. The *four* firſt concomitant Tempers, are all moſt *effectual cauſes* of better obedience and reformation; and the *laſt, viz. making of ſatisfaction*, is an *aſſiſtance* and *effect* of it. For nothing is more natural for us, than to be ſlow to do that which we are aſhamed of; to avoid what we hate; and to turn away from that which grieves and torments us, and which we are before reſolved to leave. So that if once diſobedience falls under the oppoſition of theſe paſſions and good purpoſes, it has loſt all its intereſt, and will ſurely be excluded from the ſervice of our works and actions. We have no temptation nor diſpoſition to purſue it further; we are weary of it, and offended at it, and bent againſt it, and ſo are ſure to leave and forſake it.

And becauſe this Confeſſion, thus qualified and attended as we have ſeen, is ſo genuine a cauſe of better obedience and reformation: Therefore alone it is, that ſo great things are ſpoken of it. When God ſays, *he who confeſſes his ſins ſhall find mercy*, he means, *he who confeſſes and forſakes it*, or who acknowledges his offences in ſuch ſort, as to renounce them and become obedient. His ſpeech is *metonymical*, and he implies Obedience, although he doth not mention it. For no Confeſſion of ſin will ſerve any man's turn at the laſt day, except he leave the ſame, and in his life and actions bid adieu to it.

The world, indeed, abounds with another ſort of Confeſſion, which coſts leſs, and effects nothing. They confeſs their ſins without *ſhame*, and relate them without *ſorrow*, and name them without *hatred*; they recite them to God without *reſolving* againſt them, and acknowledge them daily without any *amends*, or making any recompence and *ſatisfaction* for them.

For they cannot but be hardned againſt *ſhame*, who day by day, if not ſeveral times every day, have the face to tell God that they have rebell'd againſt him, and yet never

ver endeavour to come with another story, by disavowing and forsaking their Rebellion. They must needs be void of sorrow for sin, who will never keep back from it: And it cannot but *please* them, so long as they continue to pursue it. For they would not continually repeat their pain, and at every turn act over again their own torment and vexation. And it is beyond all doubt, that they do not *hate*, but entirely *love* disobedience, so long as they slip no opportunities of acting it. And that they are plainly *resolved* upon it, whilst they are most firmly fixt, and forward to embrace it. And since notwithstanding all their hideous Confessions they stand ready still to close with their Sin upon the first meeting, and to repeat what they confessed upon the next occasion; it is plain, that their *hearts* were never against it, whatever their words were. They only shewed their Wit, but not their Passions or Perswasion; they declaimed against it, but all the while they meant no hurt to it. For even whilst they inveighed against the *baseness*, the *loathsomness*, the *destructiveness* of their Sin; their own heart did not believe the same. They did no more, but spare God their *tongues*, and *speak* what *he* pleased: But for their *souls* and *actions*, they reserved them for their Lusts, and would *like* and *do* what they pleased *themselves*.

But can any man be so blind as to think, that such a *Confession* of Sins as this, can in *any wise* please God, and procure his Pardon? Has he any kindness for our Sins, that he should take delight to hear them spoken of? Or is any man so weak, as to think that he *honours* God, merely by *reckoning* up his own offences? Or that he is like to gain him only by declaring to him how vilely he has affronted and despised him? To confess *thus*, if it goes no further, is to * reproach him to his face, and boldly to defie him. It is a telling of him, that we have disobeyed, and are resolved to go on in it: An open profession and avowing of our Rebellion, without any real signs, or approach to amendment and due subjection. It is a Transgression bare-faced, an addition of *Impudence* to *Sin*; a continuing daily to Rebel against him, and yet coming as daily into his very presence

* *Novum monstri genus, eadem pene omnes jugiter faciunt, quæ fecisse se plangunt; & qui intrant Ecclesiasticam Domum ut mala antiqua defleant, exeunt ut moliantur.— Et sic oratio eorum RIXA est magis Criminum, quam exoratrix.* Salvian. de Gub. l. 3. p. 89. Ed. Oxon.

ſence to declare and own our continued Rebellions. And this now is not to ſupplicate, but to defie; not to beg peace, but to declare enmity; it is by no means the way to ſoften and appeaſe, but a moſt effectual courſe to exaſperate, and implacably to provoke him.

But then to go on ſtill further, and to *pretend* to him, that we are *ſorry* at our heart, and *loath* our ſelves for having ſinned againſt him, and are *reſolved* to do ſo no more; when *really*, as our after-actions (which are the trueſt interpreters of our hearts and minds) do declare, there is no ſuch thing: This is to add *mockery* to *ſin*, and a *freſh affront* to our *former diſobedience*. It is moſt groſsly to play the *hypocrite*, and in the moſt loathſome faſhion to *diſſemble* with him. It is an endeavouring to put *tricks* upon the Almighty; a tryal of his *skill*; a ſeeking to delude and impoſe upon an *infinite, wiſe* and *all-ſeeing God*, by ſuch *thin pretences*, as cannot but be ſeen through and diſcovered by any *ordinary Man*. But let no Man vainly deceive himſelf, for God is not mocked; nor can all the arts of Earth and Hell, out-wit and go beyond him. No, he ſees clearly through all this hypocriſie, and he will moſt ſeverely puniſh it. And when he comes to judge of mens Confeſſions at the laſt day, he will then, in the face of all the world, diſtinguiſh *reality* from *complement*; and an *acknowledgement of Repentance*, from one of *form and cuſtom*; and will for ever reward the *firſt*, whilſt he Eternally puniſhes the latter. He will pardon no Confeſſion of our Sins at that day, but only ſuch as is *ſorrowful, penitent* and *obedient*; and we muſt amend thoſe faults which we confeſs, before we can with reaſon hope that he will accept us.

And for this, the Scripture is clear. It is only our *returning* upon our Confeſſion, that ſhall be rewarded and forgiven. *If they Repent*, ſays *Solomon, and SAY, we have done perverſly, we have committed wickedneſs; and ſo RETURN unto the Lord with all their heart, and all their ſoul: Then HEAR their Prayer, and forgive thy people that have ſinned againſt thee*, 1 Kings 8. 47, 48, 49, 50. And to name but one place more, theſe words of *Solomon* are full and home to the purpoſe, *He who confeſſes, and FORSAKES his Sin, ſhall find mercy*, Prov. 28. 13.

That Confeſſion of our Sins then, whereupon Chriſt our Judge will at the laſt day accept and Pardon us, is ſuch only,

only, as ends in Reformation and Obedience. The service of our lives, must go along with that of our lips; and we must do as we say, and avoid what we condemn, before we can safely trust; that God will sentence us to that Mercy and Life, which are not the rewards of *idle* acknowledgments, but only of a confessing *obedience*.

Fifthly, This Gospel-condition of Life and Pardon, is sometimes call'd *Conversion*. Without this we can have no hopes of happiness, *For except ye be* CONVERTED, says our Saviour, *and become as little Children*, as void as they are of all former impressions and courses, and free to enter upon new ones, *ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matt. 18. 3. But if our Conversion goes before, God's Pardon is sure to follow after; that being the duty, and this the reward. *Repent, and be* CONVERTED, says the Apostle *Peter*, *that your Sins may be blotted out*, Acts 3. 19. Conversion sets us without the reach of Death, and beyond the precincts of Damnation; for *he who Converts a Sinner from the error of his way, doth save a Soul from* DEATH, James 5. 20.

Now our *Conversion from Sin to God*, is nothing else but our *Obedience* in another word. For it denotes a *turn* and a change, not only of our *wills* and *desires*, but withal, and that principally of our *Works* and *Actions*. For our *course of actions*, is in the familiar, and customary use of the Scriptures, call'd our way; our *Conversation*, *walking*; and our *particular Actions*, so many *several* steps: and our *turning out* of a course of Sin *into a course* of Righteousness, being like the turning out of a wrong way into a right, is call'd our *turning from* Sin, and our *turning to God*, *i. e.* in one word our *Conversion*. So that to be *Converted*, is nothing else in the Scripture-language, but to have the *course* of our works or actions turned, and from *workers* of sin, to become *workers* of obedience.

When Mercy and Life then are promised to our Conversion; they are not made over to any thing which is separate from Obedience, but to that only which denotes it, and is but another name for it. We are not *Converted* until we *obey*; so that Obedience still is that, which must procure our peace, and capacitate us for Pardon and Happiness, when Christ comes to judge us.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of Pardon promiſed to Prayer.

Sixthly, That condition, whereto the Goſpel promiſes a gracious ſentence of Mercy and Life, is ſometimes call'd *Prayer, or calling upon God. The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him*, ſays *David, to all that call upon him in truth*, Pſal. 145. 18. *Thou Lord art good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon thee*, Pſal. 86. 5. Our *asking*, is ſet out as the condition of *obtaining*, *Ask, and it ſhall be given you*, ſays our Saviour, *for EVERY one that asketh receiveth*, Mat. 7. 7, 8. And that in *all* things equally which are fit for them, one as well as another, if they do not diſturb him and *disbelieve* his Love. *For ALL things, WHATSOEVER you ſhall ask in Prayer BELIEVING, you ſhall receive*, Matt. 21. 22.

So that if Men want any thing, which they deſire God would beſtow upon them, it is becauſe they do not *beg* it of him. *Ye have not*, ſays S. *James, becauſe ye ask not*, Jam. 4. 2. For not only the *overflowing goodneſs of God's own nature*, but, beſides that, the *intereſt of his Son Jeſus Chriſt* our *MEDIATOR* at his right hand, gives us a full ſecurity in all our requeſts, that we ſhall obtain any thing which we ask in his name. *Ask any thing*, ſays he, *in my name, and I will do it*, Joh. 14. 14. Nay, ſo dear is he to Almighty God, that although he himſelf ſhould not move in it, yet, through the ſtrength of God's inexpreſſible love to him, they who beg in his name can miſs of nothing. *In that day*, ſays he, after I am taken from you, *you ſhall ask ME nothing: Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, whatſoever you ſhall ask the FATHER in MY NAME, he will give it you. And I ſay not that I will PRAY the Father for you, for the father himſelf loveth you, BECAUSE ye have loved me*, Joh. 16. 23, 26, 27. And *ſeeing*, as the Apoſtle ſays, *that we have ſo great* and powerful an *High-Prieſt at God's right hand*, whether our ſuit be for pardon, or for ſtrength, or for whatſoever elſe; *Let us come boldly to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy* for Pardon of paſt Sins, *and find*

Grace to prevent future, and to *help in time of need*, or in the most *a* fitting season, *Heb.* 4. 14, 16.

εἰς εὔκαιρον βοήθειαν.

Now our *Prayers* and *calling upon God*, are a mighty *means* and *instrument* of our *serving* and *obeying him*. And as all the forementioned means, had a *natural* fitness and tendency, to make us *do* the will of God: So, over and above that, have our *Prayers* a *supernatural*, and help us to *fulfil* the Divine Laws, not so much through any efficacy of their *own nature* (though they do by that too) as through the aids of *divine Grace*. For we have great difficulties to conflict with, and great hindrances to overcome, in the *doing* of our duty. There is much hardship in a holy course, to make us *unwilling*; and if we have a will to it, we yet find much weakness in our selves, that renders us *unable* to continue in good living, and to perform constantly all those good things which God has commanded us. For we have much ignorance of what we should *do*, and much other business besides it: And as for that moreover, which we do know, we are apt many times to forget it: or, through the throng of other things, through suddenness, and surprize, not to consider of it when we should use it; or, when in our minds we do clearly see it, yet full often we cannot bring over our wills to chuse and embrace it. For our Lusts and Passions prove many times of more force with our Wills, than our Reason and Religion; and we are either born down by the weight and strength, or wearied out with the tediousness and length of a Temptation.

And now, to supply all these defects, and to support us in the doing of our duty, notwithstanding all these infirmities, we have an absolute necessity of the help and assistance of God's grace. We want the *good timing* of his *providence*, to have temptations assault us when we are best able to overcome them, and our duties stay for us when we may most easily perform them. We stand in need of the *suggestions of his spirit*, to cure our forgetfulness; and of the *aids of his grace*, to enlighten our minds and clear up our notions, and to bend and establish our wills and resolutions, and so to make us *unmoveable* in a good course. So that we have an utter necessity of his help, both in the disposals of his *providence*, and in the concurrence of his *spirit* to enable us to obey his Laws, and make us, as St. *Paul* says, *both to will and to do what he requires of us*, Phil. 2. 13.

But

But now it is our Prayers, which bring all these *divine aids* down unto us. They obtain for us a *good providence*, and a *powerful Spirit*, which, in spite of all our natural weaknesses, shall work out our Obedience. God will not deny us these, when we ask them. For, as our Saviour argues unanswerably, *If ye being EVIL, will* yet *give GOOD gifts to your Children; How much more shall your heavenly Father*, whose *GOODNESS* infinitely exceeds yours, and who cannot be tainted with any of your *ILNESS, give the HOLY SPIRIT*, that best of gifts, *to them that ask him?* Luke 11. 13. And since our Prayers procure such a never failing Aid, and so Almighty an Assistance for us, they must needs be a certain cause and instrument of our active Service and Obedience. They imply *in us* an hearty desire of having, and fetch down to *us* a sufficient power of doing our Duty, and of keeping God's Holy Commandments. And when there is both a preparedness in us to use, and a readiness in God to give us grace sufficient therewith to do his Will, there is nothing further wanting to our Performance of it.

And forasmuch as our Prayers imply the one, and procure the other; because they fetch down Divine Aids, and express our forwardness to obey with them: Therefore have they so much favour shewn them, and Life and Pardon promised to them. For God never intends to reward an *idle* and *unobeying* Prayer, but such only, as is *Industrious* and *Obedient*. Our Prayers must first make us do what he *commands*, before they can obtain those mercies for us which he *promises*. For when he tells us, that they who *call upon him shall find favour and mercy*; he speaks *metonymically*, he encludes Obedience, although he doth not express it. He means them only, who *pray for* b *Mercy and Pardon*, and *obey* in order to receive it; and who *ask for Grace and Strength*, and *work* with it after it is granted to them. No prayers are of any account with him, but the Prayers of the Obedient; so that if ever we

b Such were the old Jewish forms of Prayer for PARDON whether with Sacrifice, or without it: With Sacrifice——*Obsecro, Domine, peccavi, deliqui, rebellavi, hoc aut illud feci; nunc autem POENITENTIAM ago, sitque hostia hæc expiatio mea:* Without Sacrifice—*Obsecro, Domine, peccavi, deliqui, rebellavi, hoc aut illud feci; nunc mei me facti POENITET, PUDET QUE, neque unquam ITERUM adid REVERTAR*, as they are cited out of *Maimonides* by the Learned Dr. *Outram* in his Book *de Sacrificiis, l.* 1. *c.* 15.

expect to be saved by them at the last day, we must obey with them.

The Prayers, indeed, which are generally offered up to God, have little of this in them. For if Men pray for *Mercy* and *Pardon*, they take no care to come furnished with *Repentance* and *Obedience*, which is that indispensible condition, whereupon the Gospel doth encourage us to ask, and hope for Pardon. And if they pray for any *Vertue* or *Grace*, they expect it should drop into them without any *endeavours* of their own, and will take no pains, to *cooperate* with it, and make *use* thereof. Their Prayers for *Mercy* are generally *Presumptuous*, and their Prayers for *Grace unendeavouring* and *idle*. And Obedience all the while, is the least in all their Thoughts, and has the least of all their care. All their Religion is only to be often upon their knees, to keep up Prayers in their Families Morning and Evening; to send up a great many *Lord forgive me's*, *Christ help me's*; they are a *praying* and *desiring* but not a *working* and *obeying* People. They are of a sordid niggardly Religion, which would receive all, and give nothing: Their Petitions look altogether on the *reward*, but quite overlook the *duty*: they would take all from God, but do nothing for him.

But this is such a way of praying, as will most certainly delude Men, but can never do them good. It is inconsiderate hope and downright folly, to expect that ever God should hear our Prayers for Pardon, whilst we continue in our Sins. For since he has so *frequently*, so *plainly*, and so *peremptorily* declared, That at the last day he will Pardon none but the *Penitent* and *Obedient*, it is *impudent incredulity* to beg pardon, whilst, without any amends we *continue* to *Sin* and *Disobey*. It is to desire of him, that he would *break his word*, that he would Pardon and *acquit* us, when his Gospel *condemns* us. It is to beg of him that he would frame *another* Religion, and *another* Law, than that of his Son Jesus; a Religion which would *save* us, when that *kills* and destroys us. Nay, by such asking forgiveness from him, whilst we go on in *rebelling* against him, we do as good as desire, that he would cease to be *Governour* of the World, and *leave* us to our own selves; that we might have no *Law*, but our own *Wills*; that we might *do* what he *forbids*, without *undergoing* what he *threatens*. We only

only ask *leave* to ſin; and crave a *liberty to transgreſs*, without *ſuffering*; and deſire that *we* might *break* his *Laws*, but that *he* would not *puniſh* us. And what Man now *dare* preſume, that ſuch *ſhameleſs* deſires as theſe, ſhould be granted to him? That God ſhould *deſert* his *Laws*, and *alter* his *Religion*, and *caſt off* his *Government* over Men, when they *requeſt* it? For in *very deed* we ſee, that *to deſire him to forgive us, whilſt we are going on in our ſins*, is in effect to put up all theſe frontleſs, and abominably impudent Petitions to him.

And then, as for the other ſort of Petitions, our *asking for any Vertue or Grace, without putting forth any endeavours after it*, it is as certain to meet with no good anſwer as the other. For to pray thus, is plainly to play the *Hypocrite* with God Almighty, and flatly to *diſſemble* with him. It is to *beg* that, which we do not *care for*; to *ask* that, which we *refuſe*; to *pretend deſire*, (for all praying is deſiring) for that which we account is *worth no endeavour*. And what a miſerable piece of falſhood is this now, when a man makes his Actions moſt palpably to give the lye to his words? For he tells God, that he *earneſtly deſires* his help, to work in him a *pure heart*; but yet he will *do nothing* for it, nor avoid the leaſt occaſion of *uncleanneſs*. He *begs* his grace, to aſſiſt him to a *meek* and *patient ſpirit*: But when he is off his knees, he thinks his work is done, for he never after *uſes* any *means to procure it*, or takes any care to *nouriſh* and *preſerve* thoſe degrees of it which he hath already. Surely, any Man of common underſtanding muſt needs ſee, that ſuch deſires as theſe were never in his Heart, but dwelt only upon his Tongue. In reality he cares not what becomes of the Graces which he has prayed for, and was no farther concerned about them, than that he might be able *barely to ſay*, that he had asked them. Or at beſt, if he did deſire them at all, yet was his deſire far from that degree, which he pretends; it was a *weak wiſh*, rather than a *deſire*, an imperfect inclination, that could effect nothing. It may be, he had *rather have* that grace which he asks, than *go without it*; but he had *rather want it*, than *be at any pains for it*. He loves and deſires a little eaſe, far more than the vertue; and is reſolved to keep that, although he loſes this. So that although he do think the grace which he prays for, to be worth ſomething, yet

he esteems it next to nothing; he judges it to be worth no pains, and deserving no endeavour, and so has either no desires of it at all, or such weak and feeble ones, as are just as good as none.

Yea, it is well, if many times his Heart is not *set against* those very Graces which he begs, whilst he is asking of them, which is more than barely being *unconcerned* for them. For how often doth it happen, that a Man prays for *Charity*, whilst he is in love with *Malice*; that he begs *Sobriety*, whilst his Heart is upon *Drunkenness*; that he asks *Justice*, whilst his affections hanker after *deceitfulness* and *wrong*? This, in very deed, is the case of *most*, if not of *all*, *impenitent* and *wicked* Men. For they love their Sins, and resolve to continue in them; and yet even then pray for such Graces, as are contrary to them. Now here it is plain, that their *Heart* doth not go along with their *Tongues*: For they are not willing to *lose* that, which they pray to God that they may *leave*; and are afraid to *receive* that, which they beg to *have*. They only *pretend* desire, but are *possessed in truth* with hatred and aversation.

And then, as for all the *good promises* which they make to God in their Prayers, *viz. That if he will forgive them, they will never do so any more; but become new Men, and watch more carefully, and sin more seldom, and obey more constantly and universally*; so long as their Prayers are thus *unindeavouring* and idle, all this is but *hypocritical pretence*, and *deceitful talk*. For if, when their Prayers are over, they take no care still to perform their Obedience, which they promised whilst they were at them; is it not clear to every eye, that all is delusion and falsehood, and that they lye and dissemble in these their *Promises*, as well as we saw they did in their *Professions*. All their ingagements are stark naught, they meant no such thing whilst they made them, nor ever after think upon them to make them good.

And can any Man now, be so intolerably weak and shamefully blind, as to imagine, that God should reward such *idle talk*, as all these unendeavouring Prayers for Grace are, and give a Blessing upon such *hypocritical and feigned language*? To dissemble thus with God Almighty, is not to *honour*, but to *abuse* him: And so fits us, not for any expressions of his *love*, but only of his *wrath* and *indignation*.

indignation. It is to *paſs affronts*, inſtead of *begging kindneſs*; to make a *mockery* of his *condeſcenſions*; and to turn that *ſacred* and *ineſtimable liberty*, which he has graciouſly indulged Mankind, of *making known their deſires to him for a ſupply and ſatisfaction of them*, into a *fraudulent trick* and *opprobrious cozenage.* And ſince all theſe *unendeavouring Prayers for God's Grace*, are an *Hypocriſie* ſo *groſs*, and a *Mockery* ſo reproachful; we muſt needs conclude, that he will utterly reject *them*, as well as our *Prayers for Pardon, whilſt we continue in our Sins*, and inſtead of granting and fulfilling, deride and avenge them.

But if ever we hope to have our Prayers heard, the *true* and *only* way is to obſerve S. *John's* rule, of *asking only what is according to God's Will. For this*, ſays he, *is the confidence which we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his Will, he heareth us*, 1 Joh. 5. 14. And what that Will of God is, concerning any of thoſe things which we have to pray for, we can learn no where, but from his Holy Goſpel.

Now in that we are plainly told, that as for *Pardon* of Sins, his peremptory Will is, That no Man ſhall meet with it, but he only who has Repented of them, and obeyed him. *REPENT*, ſays S. *Peter, that your ſins may be blotted out*, Acts 3. 19. And *except you REPENT*, ſays our Saviour, *you ſhall all Periſh*, Luk. 13. 3. For when we are all brought to Chriſt's Tribunal at the great day, to be there Eternally acquitted or condemned, we are taught in the moſt expreſs words, that *Judgment ſhall paſs upon every Man according to his WORKS*, Rev. 20. 12, 13. So that if we would ask *pardon* and forgiveneſs according to *God's Will*, and in ſuch ſort as he has promiſed to grant it, and we may juſtly hope to receive it; we muſt deſire it in *c Repentance*, and in true *Reſolutions* and readineſs to *obey*.

And then as for *Strength* and *Grace* to enable us to overcome any Sin, and to perform any Vertue; we are expreſly informed, that his *Will* is to grant it to ſuch Perſons only, as *endeavour* after thoſe Graces which they pray for, and are careful to *exerciſe* the ſame, and *work with* them. For God will not beſtow *New Grace* upon us, till he ſee that we have made good uſe of that which he has beſtowed *already*. We muſt improve thoſe *Talents*

c Ἱκέλαι γενόμενοι τῷ ἐλέῃ αὐτῷ ὅπερ ἐφῶμεν ὅτι τὸς οἰκτιρμὸς αὐτῷ ἀποδιδόντες ἢ μαθάναι-αν, τὴν πίστιν, &c. Clem. Rom. 1. Ep. ad Cor. c. 9.

which have formerly been intrusted with us, before he will think us qualified to receive more. For so we are taught in the *Parable* of those Men, who had received the *Talents*, *Mat.* 25. As a conclusion whereof, we have this laid down as a *rule* of divine Dispensations: *to him that hath*, *i. e.* hath wrought with, and made use of that Talent of Grace which was granted to him, as *those Servants* had done who are mention'd *v.* 20, 22. *to him shall he give* still more, *and he shall have more abundance: But from him that hath not*, *i. c.* hath not exercised and improved that wherewith he has already been intrusted, as that wicked Servant had not done, who had hid it, v. 25. so far is he from receiving more, *that*, like as it was from the *idle unworking Servants*, vers. 26. *from him shall be taken even what he hath*, vers. 29. And in that very place, where *S. Paul* tells us that *God worketh in us both to will and to do*; he acquaints us moreover, that the way whereby he doth that, is, by blessing our *own endeavours*, and giving success to our *own working*; and accordingly he useth it as an argument thereunto, *Work out your own Salvation*, and doubt not but you will be able to go through with it, *for it is God that* prospers your endeavours, and, by giving strength and success to them, *worketh in you both to will and to do*, Phil. 2. 12, 13. So that if we would ask *grace* and *strength* according to God's *Will*, and in such sort as he will grant them, at the time of Praying, we must *sincerely resolve*; and when our Prayer is over, we must *carefully and honestly endeavour* after them. An * *effectual desire* shall serve our turn: And a *working Prayer* shall procure a blessing: But besides it, no other will.

* Jam. 5. 16.

Whatever therefore vain and wicked People may imagine, there is no Prayer that will avail them, when Obedience is wanting. If we pray for *Pardon* and *Mercy*, God will by no means hear us, unless our *Hearts* are *Penitent*, and our *Lives Obedient*. And in our Prayers for *forgiveness*, we must pray for *Obedience* too. We must be as sollicitous, for the *doing* of our *Duty*, as for the *receiving* of our *Reward*; and never in our Prayers omit to ask for that, which Christ thought fit to give us as the highest instance of those things which we are to pray for, *viz.* the *Holy Spirit*, Luk. 11. 13. And when we do pray for that, or for any particular Graces of it; we see

that

that we have not done our work barely by *deſiring it*, till we go on alſo to *endeavour* after it. We muſt *reſolve* when we pray, to ſeek that Grace which we ask for; and we muſt *effectually labour* after it, in the diligent uſe of all thoſe means whereby it is either acquired or encreaſed, when our Prayer is over. All the way, it is only our Obedience which can effectually recommend our Prayers; ſo that whenſoevet we ask for any thing, if we would have any juſt hope of receiving it, we muſt be ſure to obey with it.

And for this, the *Scriptures* are expreſs and plain. *If I regard iniquity in my Heart*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *the Lord will not HEAR me*, Pſal. 66. 18. And God himſelf ſays the ſame by his Prophet *Iſaiah*, in words moſt full and forcible. *When you ſpread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when you make many Prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of Blood. Waſh you, make you clean, put away the EVIL of your DOINGS from before mine eyes, ceaſe to DO evil, learn to DO well; ſeek judgment, relieve the oppreſſed, judge the fatherleſs, plead for the widow.* When you have done this, you are fit to be hearkned to, *come now and let us reaſon together*; pray for Pardon and I will forgive you, and *though your ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be white as ſnow*, Iſa. 1. 15, 16, 17, 18. Thus alſo the wiſe Man tells us, *that he that turns away his ear from HEARING the Law; even his PRAYER ſhall be an abomination*, Prov. 28. 9. And, *the eyes of the Lord are over the Righteous*, ſaith S. *Peter*, *and his ears are open to THEIR Prayers:* but the *FACE of the Lord is againſt them that DO evil*, 1 Pet. 3. 12. And the acceptableneſs of a Chriſtians Prayer, conſiſts, as S. *Paul* intimates, *in lifting up holy hands*, 1 Tim. 2. 8. Before *God will Pardon* any Man upon his Prayers, *Chriſt's Goſpel* muſt *abſolve* him; it muſt *promiſe*, before God *perform* with him. And no Man has any other aſſurance, that he ſhall receive what he deſires, but his having done what God commands. *If my words abide in you*, ſays our Saviour, *you ſhall ask what you will, and it ſhall be done unto you*, Joh. 15. 7. And *whatſoever we ask we receive of him*, ſays S. *John*, *becauſe we KEEP his Commandments, and DO thoſe things that are pleaſing in his ſight*, 1 Joh. 3. 21, 22.

And

And by all this it clearly appears, that no Prayers will *avail* us unto *Life* and *Pardon* at the last day, unless we *keep* God's Commandments, and obey with them. There is no *Grace* to be obtained, without *endeavours*; nor any *Pardon* to be purchased, without *Obedience*. God will not *hear* us, if we refuse to *hearken* unto him. Nothing can maintain a good understanding betwixt him and us, but only the *DOING* of our Duty; Upon this condition he will grant us any thing, but without it we can procure nothing. So that after all, it is only our Obedience which can make our Prayers available; and if ever we expect that God should grant them, we must be sure to work and obey with them.

CHAP. VI.

Of Pardon promised to our fear of God, and trust in him.

Seventhly, That condition whereupon we shall be Eternally accepted at the Last day, is sometimes call'd our *fear of God*, and sometimes our *trust* and *hope* in him.

As for our *fear* of God, it is made the great means of our Pardon and acceptance. *I will teach you the good and right way* to your Bliss and Happiness, said *Samuel* to the *Israelites*: *only fear the Lord, and* in vertue of that fear, *serve him*, 1 Sam. 12. 24, 25. This fear has given right to pardon in all times, and will eternally secure it. For *God's Mercy is on them that fear him, from Generation to Generation*, Luke 1. 50. *From Everlasting to Everlasting*, Psal. 103. 17. So that well might *Solomon* say, *The Fear of the Lord is a Fountain of Life*, Prov. 14. 27. And that he *surely knew it will go well with them that fear the Lord*, Eccles. 8. 12.

Psal. 115. 11, 13.

And then, as for our *Hope*, or *Trust* in God; great things are spoken of it. *Blessed is he*, saith the Psalmist, *who maketh the Lord his Trust*, Psal. 40. 4. He is secure from all effects of his Wrath and heavy Displeasure; for the

the Lord *taketh pleaſure in them that hope in his Mercy*, Pſal. 147. 11. In particular, our *relying on Chriſt*, and *confiding in him* for our pardon and eternal ſalvation, is ſaid to be that, which will never fail or deceive us. For *he that* hopeth or *believeth on him*, ſays S. *Paul*, *ſhall never be aſhamed*, by a miſplaced confidence or expectation, *Rom.* 10. 11.

Now our *fear* of God, and our *hope* or *truſt* in his mercy, are of all our paſſions the moſt active Cauſes, and powerful Springs of our good Works and Obedience.

As for our *fears*, no paſſion puts us upon ſo much pains and induſtry, as they do. They make us act to the utmoſt of our power, and do all that is to be done, to get protection from that evil which excites them. For fear has the deepeſt root in our natural *ſelf-love*, and deſire of our own preſervation; being raiſed in us by the nearneſs of ſuch things, as either utterly deſtroy, or in ſome degree impare it. And therefore in them, the activity of our ſelf-love is ſhewn to the utmoſt: And as vehemently as we deſire, and endeavour to preſerve our ſelves, and our own eaſe; ſo vehemently muſt we deſire, and endeavour likewiſe to remove the matter of our fears, which hangs over us, to deſtroy or to torment us.

The moſt natural effect of *fear* then, is a moſt *vigorous endeavour* by all means to remove that evil, which we are afraid of. And according as this may be done *ſeveral ways*; ſo doth our paſſion of fear exert it ſelf after *ſeveral manners*. If we think the evil may be *conquered*, it puſhes us on to *fight* and *ſubdue* it. If it be *above our ſtrength*, but may yet for all that *be avoided*, it puts us upon all means of *concealment* or *eſcape*, and makes us ſeek either to *lie hid*, or to *fly from* it. But if there is neither any proſpect of *withſtanding the power*, nor of *eſcaping the eye* of him, who is ready to inflict it; as there never can be, when God, who is both *Almighty* and *All-ſeeing*, is the Perſon feared; then it hurries us on by all means to *regain his favour* and good will, that thereby we may *prevent* it. And in Times of *Ignorance*, when Men had great *fears* and little *knowledge*, when they were grievouſly afraid of God, but knew not what things he loved and delighted in, nor wherewith they might pleaſe him; this fear of God put them upon all the *nonſenſical ſervices*, and *fooliſh propitiations of Superſtition*. But where

God

God has *plainly and clearly revealed his Will*, and manifested to all, that it is their *Obedience* alone can *continue* them in his favour, or *restore* them to it after they have lost it: Here the only effect of fear, must needs be that which is known to be the only means of favour, *viz.* our *keeping his Commandments*, or Obedience. So that our fear of God, is a most sure Principle, and effectual means of our serving and obeying him.

And then as for our *hope*, or trust in God's Mercy, it is a most natural cause of our *doing* our *Duty* likewise. For all *hope* implies, both *desire*, and a *likelihood* of getting that which is desired; which *two* are all that is at any time needful, to make us vigorously endeavour after it. For if Men will be at no pains for a thing, it is either because they have little or no desire of it, or no probability of succeeding in it. But when once they are push'd on by an *eager desire* it is only *despair* that can dull their endeavours in pursuit of it. So that if we *hope* for Mercy, we shall be at some pains for it, and, by an active Service and Obedience, seek to procure it.

Indeed, when the good thing that is hoped for needs no labour of ours, but our naked *trust* and *reliance* is all that is required to it on our side, our *hope* will effect no endeavour after it, because none is necessary to obtain it. But as for that *eternal Life* and pardon, which Christ's Gospel proposeth to our hopes, they are offered to us only upon certain *Terms* and *Conditions*, and will never be attained by us, without our *Service* and *Obedience*. And seeing *Obedience* here is the *necessary means*, to the acquisition of that which we *desire*; the same *desire* and *hope*, which carries us on towards *mercy* and *life*, must spur us on withal to works of *Duty* and *Obedience* also. They must be a Spring of industry and good endeavour, because they make us resolve to procure that, which is not to be got without them.

And in regard our *fear* of God, and our *hope* or *trust* in his *mercy*, are such powerful Principles of our *Obedience* to his Laws; therefore are *Pardon* and *Life*, which are the rewards of *Obedience*, so frequently *promised* to them. God never intends to reward an *idle fear*, or an *unactive* and *careless trust*, but such only, as are *industrious* and *obedient*.

'Tis

'Tis true, indeed, the generality of Men have taken up a dangerous errour, eſpecially in the latter of theſe, and are bold and preſumptuous in their *hopes*, at the ſame time that they are moſt wicked and diſobedient in their Lives and Practice. They find no Service of their own works wherein they may be confident, and therefore they fly from them to God's Goodneſs. They know this full well by themſelves, that *they* are *wicked*; but they know withal, that *God* is *gracious*, and their *hope* is, that He will be *merciful* to them *notwithſtanding their impenitence in their ſins*. They find themſelves *condemned* indeed by his *Goſpel*, but their truſt is to be *relieved* by his Nature. And the Revelations of his Word, breath out nothing to them, but Death; but their hope is, that he will be better than his Word, and that through the infiniteneſs of his mercy, they ſhall at laſt be adjudged to pardon and eternal life.

But ſuch *bold hopes* and *preſumptuous confidences* as theſe, are the ready way to *provoke* and *offend God*, but by no means to *atone* and *appeaſe him*. For thus to *hope in his Mercy* againſt the *plain Declarations of his Will*, is to caſhier thoſe meaſures of life which he hath given us, and by uſurping the place of Judge and Governour of the World, to make others of our own. It is plainly to oppoſe his *Nature* to his *Goſpel*, by making *it bleſs* thoſe whom *this condemns*, and to become *Infidels* to his *Religion and Truth*, under *colour* of *promoting his Mercy* and *Goodneſs*. It *reproacheth his Nature* under a *pretence of Honouring* it, by making his Vertues interfere, and his Excellencies inconſiſtent, and robbing him of one moſt glorious Attribute, to exalt another. But when he comes at laſt to judge the World, he will effectually aſſert the truth of his Goſpel, and vindicate the Honour of his injured Attributes, in paſſing a juſt cenſure, and inflicting a moſt ſevere puniſhment, on all ſuch Blaſphemous preſumptions as theſe are. For it is not an *idle truſt in God*, or an *ineffective recumbency and reliance on Chriſt for Salvation*, that ſhall avail any Man at that Day. But if they have deſpiſed his Laws, and their Lives are incorrigibly Diſobedient, let them be as preſumptuous as they pleaſe with God, and as bold as they will with their Saviour, they ſhall certainly go to Hell in the midſt of all their high flown hopes and daring confidences. For God will be as good as his Word, and puniſh Diſobedience according as he has threatned it. And

moreover,

moreover, it is not only in his *Word*, but in his very *Nature*, that he hates and abhors Sin: So that he can never be brought to reward and encourage it, being determined by his *Natural Inclination*, as well as by the Truth of his Gospel, eternally to punish and avenge it. *He is not a God*, saith the Psalmist, *who hath pleasure in Wickedness*; no, as an Argument of that, he will not endure it in his Presence, *Evil shall not dwell with him. The Foolish*, or Disobedient, *shall not* be suffered to *stand in his sight*, for *he hateth all the workers of iniquity*. Psal. 5. 4, 5.

No Man therefore must dare to place his *hope* and *trust in God*, till in his *works he honestly obeys him*. A *Faithfull Obedience*, is the only firm Foundation of a *sure trust*; and it is only our *doing* what he requires, that can give us sufficient grounds to *expect* the performance of those Mercies which he promises.

When God says then, that he who *fears the Lord shall be blessed*, and that he who *trusts* and *hopes in him shall not finally be ashamed*; he speaks not of such *fear* and *trust*, as *are separate* from Obedience, but of such only as are conjoined with it. The Phrase is *metonymical*, our Obedient Works are implyed, although they are not expresly mentioned; for we must *obey* him through *fear*, and do what he commands us, in *hopes* of obtaining those mercies which he promises, or else we shall never attain those blessings which we hope for.

And for this, the Testimonies of the Scriptures are *many*, and *plain*.

For as for our *fear of God*, it is of no account with him, further than it makes us Obedient; *The fear of the Lord*, says *Solomon, is to hate evil*, Prov. 8. 13. It must be an instrument of amendment and reformation; a *fear, whereby Men depart from evil*, Prov. 16. 6. A means of *perfecting* our Obedience and holy living; for that is S. *Paul's* Character of it, when he tells us of *PERFECTING holiness in the fear of the Lord*, 2 Cor. 7. 1. And of *WORKING out our own SALVATION with fear and trembling*, Phil. 2. 12. It is only when Obedience thus follows upon our fear, and is effected by it; that God accepts and rewards it. *I will teach you the right way* to Pardon and Happiness, said *Samuel*, *Fear the Lord*, and, together with that, *SERVE him*, 1 Sam. 12. 24, 25. For if we would *hear the conclusion of the whole matter*,

as,

as, ſaith the Wiſe Man, we muſt *fear God, and keep his Commandments*; *this* Obedience and fear together *is the whole Duty of Man*, Eccleſ. 12. 13. No Man therefore can lay a juſt claim to God's Mercy at the laſt day; but he who has fear'd him in ſuch a ſort, as out of that religious fear intirely to obey him. But whoſoever fears ſo, Mercy ſhall reſt on him for ever. For *the mercy of the Lord is from everlaſting to everlaſting on them that fear him*, provided that out of that fear they *keep his Covenant, and his Commandments to DO them*, Pſal. 103. 17, 18.

And then, for our *truſt and hope in God's mercy*, it is no *ſaving truſt*, but a *reproachful and bold preſumption*, if we hope in him, whilſt we are impenitently Diſobedient and Rebellious againſt him. For a good Man's *truſt*, is only in *promiſed* Mercies, which are never made to ſuch as wilfully and impenitently trangreſs God's Laws, but only to thoſe who honeſtly obey them. It is a truſt, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *in God's Word*, and not againſt it, *Pſal.* 119. 42. And becauſe that word denounces nothing, but woes and threatnings to all wicked Men, therefore, as he ſpeaks in another place, *ſhall the Righteous* alone *truſt in him*, Pſal. 64. 10. And *every Man that hath this Hope*, as *S. John* ſaith, *muſt purifie himſelf*, 1 Joh. 3. 3. Diſobedience, ſo long as Men continue in it, is a moſt *deſperate* and forlorn Condition, there being no juſt hope to any Man but in *well-doing*. It is, ſays *S. Paul, in teaching us to deny all Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, and to live Godlily, Soberly, and Righteouſly in this preſent World*, that the Goſpel encourages us to *look for the* fulfilling of our *bleſſed hope*, Tit. 2. 12, 13. And the way to *hold faſt the confidence, and joy of* a juſt *hope* in Chriſt *firm unto the end*, he informs the Hebrews, is only by *hearing*, and thereupon obeying *God's voice, and not hardning their Hearts*, as the *Iſraelites* did, *in the provocation*, or in thoſe tranſgreſſions wherewith they provoked him, *in the day of* their *Temptation in the Wilderneſs*, Heb. 3. 6, 7, 8. *And* the *full aſſurance of hope*, as he again declares to them, is no otherwiſe to be upheld, but by *Men's diligence in obeying, and in the work and labour of love*; which implies the whole of our Obedience, *Heb.* 6. 10, 11. So that, as the Pſalmiſt ſays, they muſt *truſt in the Lord*, and, together with that, *do good*, who are to receive mercy from him, *Pſal.* 37. 3.

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If Men therefore will dare to Sin, and yet presume; affront God's Majesty, and still trust in his Mercy; They must needs *deceive* their own Souls to their utter destruction. For it is a *vain confidence*, and an *impudent presumption* in any Man, to *rely* upon *God's goodness* for the pardon of his Sins, *without repenting* of them, and *obeying* him; when as he has plainly told us, That his *goodness* it self shall pity and pardon none, but the *Penitent* and *Obedient*. He trusts to a false hope, and leans upon a broken Reed; for as long as his transgressions continue to separate between him and his God, whatever God *CAN* do, yet he *WILL* not save him. *The Lord's hand*, saith the Prophet *Isaiah* to the afflicted Jews, *is not shortned that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your Sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. For your hands are defiled with Blood, and your fingers with iniquity, your Lips have spoken lyes, your Tongue hath uttered perverseness: None calls for Justice, nor any pleads for truth*; and since your Disobedience is so heinous, your hope must needs be false, *you TRUST in vanity*, Isai. 59. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Even our Blessed Lord himself, died not to reconcile God to Men's Sins, and to procure hopes of Pardon for the finally impenitent and unperswadably disobedient. So that no Man may ever think himself delivered, to act Wickedness; or wilfully transgress God's Laws, and still dare to trust in him. But if any are so bold and shameless, Christ will rebuke them at the last Day, as God doth the presumptuous Jews by the Prophet *Jeremiah*. *Behold*, says he, *you trust in lying words, which cannot profit* you. *Will you Steal, Murther, and commit Adultery, and swear falsly*, and notwithstanding all that, *come and stand before me in this House which is called by my Name*, as Men who own my service, and dare trust in my love, *and say* as in effect you do by such usage, *we are delivered to do all these abominations*? Dare you, by this presuming upon my favour in the midst of all your Transgressions, make me become a Patron and Protector of your villainies? *And is this House, which is called by my Name, become a Den* or Receptacle and Sanctuary *of Robbers in your eyes*? *Behold I, even I have seen it, saith the Lord*; and that surely not to encourage and reward, but most severely to punish

puniſh it; for *I will* utterly *caſt you* out of *my ſight*, Jer. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15.

Thus will God by no means endure to have his own moſt *holy Nature* become a *ſupport to Sin*, nor his *Religion* to be made a *refuge* for *diſobedience*; nor his *Mercy* and *Goodneſs* turned into a *Sanctuary* to *wicked* and unholy *Men*. So that no Man muſt dare to hope and truſt in him, but he only who honeſtly obſerves his Laws, and uprightly obeys him.

The *fear of God* then, and *truſt in his Mercy*, which the Goſpel encourages, and which Chriſt our Judge will at the laſt Day accept of, is not a fear and truſt *without obedience*, but ſuch only as *implies* it. We muſt *ſerve him in fear*, and *obey him through hope*, as ever we expect he ſhould acquit and pardon us. For no fears or hopes will avail us unto Bliſs, but thoſe which amend our Lives, and effect in us an honeſt ſervice and obedience.

CHAP. VII.

Of Pardon promiſed to the love of God, and of our Neighbour.

Eighthly, That condition, which the Goſpel indiſpenſibly requires of us to our pardon and happineſs, is ſometimes called *Love*. For of this S. *Paul* ſays plainly, that it is the *fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. 13. 10. It is the great condition of Life, the ſtanding Terms of mercy and happineſs. We have the ſame Apoſtle's word for it of our *love of God*. *Thoſe things, which neither Eye hath ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither have entred into the Heart of Man to conceive, are prepared for them who* LOVE *God*, 1 Cor. 2. 9. And again, *Chap.* 8. *If any Man love God, the ſame is* known or *accepted of him*, verſ. 3. And S. *John* ſays as much of the *love of our Neighbour*. *Beloved, let us* LOVE *one another, for* LOVE *is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God*, 1 John 4. 7. And again, *God is Love, and manifeſted his Love in giving Chriſt to die for us. And if we love one another, God dwells in us: For hereby,*

by this mark and evidence, *we know that we dwell in him, and he in us*; *because he hath given us of* this loving temper and *Spirit of his*, ver. 8, 9, 12, 13. And to the same purpose he speaks fully, in the third Chapter of that first Epistle; *We know*, says he, *that we have passed from death unto life, because we LOVE the BRETHREN*, ver. 14.

Now our hearty *love both of God and Men*, is a most natural and easie Principle, of an intire service and obedience. For the most genuine and proper effect of Love, is to seek the satisfaction and delight of the persons beloved. It is careful to behave it self unseemly in nothing but to keep back from every thing that may offend; and is forward in all such services, as may any ways pleasure and content them; if they *rejoyce*, it *congratulates*; if they *mourn*, it *grieves* with them. If they are in *distress*, it affords *succour*; if in *want*, *supply*; in *doubts* it ministers *counsel*; in *business dispatch*. It is always full and teeming with good offices, and transforms it self into all shapes whereby it may procure their satisfaction, and render their condition comfortable and easie to them. So that it exerts it self, *in pity to the miserable, in protection to the oppressed, in relief to the indigent, in counsel to the ignorant, in encouragement to the good, in kind reproof to the evil, in thanks for kindnesses, in patience and forbearance upon sufferings, in forgiveness of wrongs and injuries*: In one word, it is an universal Source and Spring, of all works of *Justice, Charity, Humility and Peace.*

Now the Body of our Religion, is made up of these Duties. For *what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, O Man*, saith the Prophet *Michah, but to do justly, to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God*, Mic. 6. 8. Those things which God hath adopted into his Service, and made the matter of our duty towards one another, are nothing else but these natural effects of love and kindness and expressions of good nature towards all Men. For all the Precepts of Religion, only forbid our doing evil, and require our doing good, to all the World. And since, as the Apostle Argues, Love seeketh all things that are good, and *worketh no evil to our Neighbour*; *therefore Love* must needs be *the fulfilling of those Laws* which concern them. *This Commandment*; for instance, as he illustrates *it*, *Thou shalt not commit Adultery*; *thou shalt not kill*; *thou shalt not steal*; *thou shalt*

ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs; thou ſhalt not covet: All theſe, *and if there be any other Commandment* relating to our Brethren, *it is briefly comprehended in this* Saying, *Thou ſhalt LOVE thy NEIGHBOUR as thy ſelf.* For *LOVE worketh none* of all theſe *ills to our Neighbour, therefore LOVE is the fulfilling of the Law,* Rom. 13. 9, 10.

Thus doth our *Love of our Neighbour,* fulfil all thoſe particular Laws, which contain our Duty towards *them:* And in like manner, our *Love of God* fulfils all thoſe other Precepts, which comprehend our Duty towards *him.* For all that he requires of us towards himſelf, is neither more nor leſs, than to *honour and worſhip him;* to do nothing in all our behaviour, that ſavours of diſreſpect towards him; nor by any thought, word or action, to diſgrace or contemn him. But now nothing renders any perſon ſo ſecure from contempt, as our love and affection for him. For affront and reproach, do not only ſhew neglect, but are expreſſions of enmity and ill-will, and ſo can never proceed from us towards thoſe perſons whom we love and value. And if we are kindly affected towards any perſon, we ſhall not fail to expreſs a juſt reſpect for him; and if he is cloathed with excellence and power over us, to bear him all due Honour and Veneration. So that if we do indeed love God, he is ſecure from all affront: And diſobedience being a plain and open reproach, ſince our Love will not permit us to diſhonour him, it can never ſuffer us to diſobey him.

Thus mighty and powerful, eaſie and natural a Principle of an univerſal obedience, both towards God and men, is an univerſal Love: It doth the work without difficulty, and carries us on to obey with eaſe; in as much as all the particular Precepts and Inſtances of obedience, are but ſo many genuine effects, and proper expreſſions of it. The effects of our love, are the parts of our obedience; the products of our Duty and Religion, as well as of our Paſſion. So that it is a moſt natural Spring of our obedient ſervice, becauſe it prompts us to the very ſame things, to which God has bound and obliged us by his Precepts.

But beſides this way of an univerſal Love's influencing an univerſal obedience, through this coincidence of the effects of Love, and the inſtances of Duty; our Love of God, who is our *King* and *Governour,* were a ſure principle of

our obedience to him, were his Precepts inſtanced, not in the ſame things which are the effects of a general Love, which is the true Caſe, but in things different from them. For although our Love would not prompt us to perform them by its natural tendency towards them, and for their own ſakes; Yet it would, through ſubmiſſion and duty, and for his ſake who enjoyn'd them. It would make us deny our ſelves to pleaſure him; and produce other effects than our own Temper enclines us to, to do him ſervice. For as Love is for doing hurt to none; ſo leaſt of all to Governours: It will give to every one their own, but to them moſt eſpecially. Now Duty and Service is that, which we owe to our Rulers; and the proper way of Love's exerting it ſelf in giving them their dues, is by obedience. If we love, we ſhall be induſtrious to pleaſe; and there is no way of pleaſing them, without doing what they command us. For it is always an offence to a Governour to tranſgreſs his Laws; and a very provoking injury, to oppoſe his Will, and deſpiſe his Authority. To do this, is to renounce our ſubjection, and to caſt off his Yoke; which no reaſonable Man can look on as the way to pleaſe him, but to defy him; nor as the way to expreſs Love, but to declare enmity againſt him. For diſobedience to our Governours is clearly the moſt profeſt hatred, as the obſervance of our Duty is the moſt allowed inſtance of friendſhip and good-will.

So that Love is a Spring and Principle of our Obedience, not only becauſe the Commandment and it run parallel, and the inſtances of God's Laws are the ſame with the effects of a general Love; but alſo becauſe our love of God would make us obey him, even in ſuch inſtances of Duty as differ from them. For all that averſion which we have to the thing commanded, would be outweighed by our deſire to pleaſe him who commands it; and although we ſhould neglect it upon its own account, yet for his ſake we ſhould certainly fulfil and perform it.

And becauſe our Love of *God* and *men*, is ſo natural a Spring, and ſo ſweet and eaſie a Principle, to produce in us a perfect and intire obedience to all *thoſe* Laws, which concern *either*, or to any *other*; therefore has God promiſed ſo nobly to reward it. He never intends to crown an idle and unworking Love; but ſuch only, as is active and

and induſtrious. For when he ſays, that he who *loves God and men is known of God, and accepted by him, and born of him, and that God dwells in him, and has prepared Heaven for him*; He ſpeaks *metonymically*, and means all the while a love with theſe religious effects, or a love that is productive of an entire ſervice and obedience.

And to this Point, the Scriptures ſpeak fully: For as for our Love of God himſelf, and of our Saviour Chriſt; that is plainly of no account in his judgment, but when it makes us keep his Commandments, and become induſtriouſly obedient. *If ye LOVE me*, ſaith Chriſt, *keep my Commandments; for he that hath my Commandments, and KEEPETH them, he it is that loveth me; and he* only *who* ſo *loveth me*, in obeying me, *ſhall be beloved of my Father, and I will love him*, John 14. 15, 21. *Whoſo keepeth God's Word*, ſaith S. *John*, *in him verily is the love of God made perfect: And hereby* it is, by this perfection of Love in Obedience, that *we know we are in him*, 1 Joh. 2. 5. But if we have only a pretended *verbal love*, or an *inward paſſion* for God, and ſhew no *Signs* or *Effects* thereof in our *obedient works* and *actions*; we ſhall be as far from being accepted by him, as we are from any true and real ſervice of him. He will look upon all our Profeſſions, as vain ſpeech, and fawning flattery; but will not eſteem the ſame, as having in them ſober ſerviceable Truth, and rewardable Reality: For *whoſoever hath this World's goods, and ſeeth his Brother hath need, and* obeys not God's Command of ſhewing mercy (and the Caſe is the ſame in other inſtances) but *ſhutteth up his bowels of compaſſion from him*; *how dwells the love of God in him?* 1 Joh. 3. 17.

And then, as for our *love of our Brethren*; it doth not at all avail us unto Mercy and Life, unleſs it make us perform all thoſe things which are required of us, by the Laws of *Juſtice*, *Charity* and *Beneficence* towards them. *My little Children*, ſaith S. *John*, *let us not love* only *in word, and in Tongue*; *but in deed* alſo *and in truth*. For it is *hereby*, by this operative love, that *we know we are of the truth, and ſhall aſſure our hearts* in full confidence of his mercy *before him*, 1 Joh. 3. 18, 19. Our *love to them* is to be manifeſted, as *Chriſt's* Love was to us, *viz.* in *good effects* and a *real ſervice*; yea, when occaſion requires it, and when their eternal weal may be very much promoted, and their Faith confirmed thereby, in giving up our

selves to *Martyrdom*, and laying down our own lives for their advantage. *Hereby*, says this same Apostle, *perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us.* And if we would be reputed to have that love, which, as we are told at the fourteenth Verse, transfers us *from Death unto Life*; *we ought*, upon a fit occasion, not to flinch from the most costly service, but even *to lay down our* very * *lives for the Brethren*, 1 *John* 3. 16. Our Love will not be rewarded as a thing that is *absolute* in it self, but only as an *Instrument*; in as much as *it makes us*, as S. *Paul* says, *to fulfil the whole Law*, which makes any thing an instance of Duty towards them, *Rom.* 13. 8. But if we only profess love to them in *kind words* and *tender expressions*, but shew none in our *works* and *actions*; this idle, useless Love, will be of no account to *us*, nor benefit us more than it profits *them*. *For if a Brother, or a Sister*, says S. *James*, *be naked and destitute of daily food*; *and one of you* gives them only some good words, and *says unto them*, *Depart in peace, be ye warm'd*, with Clothes, *and filled* with Food; but *notwithstanding* all this affectionate language, *ye give them not in* the mean while *those things which are needful for the Body*; *what doth it profit?* Nothing at all surely, nor will it ever advantage your selves as an instance of that *mercy which rejoyceth against judgment*, ver. 13. more than it profits them, *James* 2. 15, 16.

* S. *Clemens R.* tells us of these heights of Charity, which were practised in his Time, ὅτι σάμεδα πολλὰς ἐν ἡμῖν· ἑαυτὰς ἐδωκότας ἑαυτὰς εἰς δεσμὰ, ὅπως ἕτερος λυτρώσωνται πολλοὶ, ἑαυτὰς παρέδωκαν εἰς δουλείαν, καὶ λαβόντες τὰς τιμὰς αὐτῶν, ἑτέρας ἐφόμισαν, 1 *Ep. ad Cor. c* 55. And the *Parabolani*, or Men who hazarded their own lives to redeem the lives of others, were very numerous among the Christians in the first times. Which Offices S. *Paul* tells us, *Priscilla* and *Aquilla*, and *Epaphroditus* had done for him, *Rom.* 16. 3, 4. *Phil.* 2. 30. This practice is a most excellent Comment upon this Text.

So that when Christ comes to Judgment at the last Day, we see plainly, that no Love, either of *God* or *Men*, will avail us, but only that which has kept the Commandments. If we are acquitted at that Bar, it must be for a *loving Service*, and not upon any pretence of Love without Obedience.

And thus at last we have fully seen, that as for all those other things besides Obedience, whereunto the Gospel promises pardon and happiness; they are by no means available to our bliss when they are separate from Obedience,

dience, but then only when they effect and imply it. They all aim at it, and end in it, and are of no account in God's Judgment, further than they produce it. For it is not, either *our knowing Chriſt, or our believing Chriſt, or our being in Chriſt, or our truſting in Chriſt, or our loving Chriſt, or our fears of God, or our confeſſions of Sins, or our pouring our many Prayers*; or any thing elſe that will ſave us whilſt we go on to diſobey. No, at the laſt Day we ſhall certainly be condemned notwithſtanding them, without a Faith that has wrought, or at leaſt that effectually would work if it were tryed, and if the obedience of our works is wanting. It is only ſuch a *working ſervice*, that will pleaſe our Judge, and ſecure us. Chriſt's Goſpel, whereby all of us muſt ſtand or fall in that Court, has fully declared this already; and Chriſt himſelf will then confirm it. So that 'tis in vain to caſt about for other *marks*, and to ſeek after other *evidences* of our title to bliſs and happineſs; nothing leſs than our Repentance and Obedience will avail us unto life; and through the *merits* of Chriſt, and the *Grace of his Goſpel*, it ſhall.

And now at laſt we ſee clearly what that Condition is, which the Goſpel indiſpenſibly requires of us, and which is to mete out to us our laſt doom of bliſs or miſery; that in the *general* it is nothing elſe, neither more nor leſs than our *obedience*.

BOOK II.

Of the Laws of the Gospel, which are the Rule of this Obedience, in particular.

CHAP. I.

Of the particular Laws Comprehended under the Duty of Sobriety.

BUT in regard our *working* and *obeying* is that, whereupon all our *hopes* and *happiness*, our *security* and *comfort* hangs; it is very necessary, that after all which has been hitherto discoursed of it in the *general*, we go on still further, and enquire of it more *particularly*. For if it be our *Obedience* or *Disobedience*, that must dispense out *Life* or *Death* to us, and eternally *save* or *destroy* us at the last Day; then whosoever would know before-hand what shall be his *final Sentence*, must enquire what is his *present state*, and what have been his *past actions*, whether in them he have *obeyed* or *no*. And the way to understand that, is *first* to know what those *Laws* are whereto his *obedience* is due, and in what *manner* and *degrees* he is to *obey* them: And when once he has informed himself in these, he may quickly learn from the *Testimony* of his own heart and *Conscience*, whether he has *performed* that *Obedience*, which is indispensibly required to his happiness, or has *fallen short* of it.

And to give the best assistance that I can in so weighty a Case, I will here proceed to enquire further into this *Obedience*, and shew concerning it these *two* things;

I. *What those Laws are, which the Gospel bids us to obey under the Sanctions of Life or Death.* And,

II. *What degrees and manner of obedience, is indispensibly required to them.*

I. Then

I. Then I will enquire, *what those Laws are, whereby at the last Day we must all be judged, and which the Gospel binds us to obey under the Sanction of Life or Death.*

And that I may render this enquiry as useful as I can, I will set down, as I go along, the *meaning* and *explication* of those several *Vertues* and *Vices*, which are either *required* or *forbidden* in the *particular Laws*, that so we may more truly and readily understand, whether the Vertues have been performed, or the Vices incurred; and whether thereby the Laws have been broken or kept by us.

As for the *Laws* and *Commands of God*, they are all reduced by S. *Paul* to three Heads. For either they require something from us *towards God himself*, and so are contained in *works of Piety*; or *towards our Neighbours*, all which are comprehended in *works of Righteousness*; or towards our *own selves*, as all those Precepts do which are taken up in *works of Sobriety*. In these three general Vertues is comprized the *Sum* of our *Christian Duty*, even all that which is required by the *Gospel* as the *Condition of Salvation*. For the Gospel, saith he, or that *Grace of God which brings us* the welcome offers of *Salvation, hath appeared* now *to all Men, teaching us*, as ever we expect that Salvation which it tenders to us, *that denying ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should* LIVE SOBERLY, GODLY *and* RIGHTEOUSLY, *in this present World*, Tit. 2. 11, 12.

I begin with that, which contains all our Duty towards our selves, *viz. Sobriety.*

Sobriety is in the general, *such a regulation of all our actions*, whether they concern our Bodies or our Souls, *as makes it appear that they are guided by a* (b) *sound mind presiding in Flesh, and that the animal Body which they flow from, is under the Command of a spiritual Reason.* It is a doing that which is becoming and fit for such Creatures, as are Soul as well as Body; or that have a wise and discerning Spirit, which should govern and give Laws in this lump of Flesh. So that Sobriety is a taking care, and giving what is *due* and *becoming* to both the Parts of our Natures, viz. our *Bodies* and our *Souls.*

As for our *Bodies* all the things in the World which affect them, are of a *limited goodness* or *illness*; but yet in their *desires* and *aversations of them*, they do not of themselves

(b) So Σωφροσύνη, the Greek name for sobriety is fetch'd by the Greek Lexicons from Σῶς; and φρήν, from its preserving and evidencing a *sound* Mind or Reason.

themselves know any Limits: So that in *their desires and actions*, that *dueness* and *decency* which Sobriety prescribes, is *keeping within due bounds* or *moderation*.

And this Moderation is either,

1. Of their *desires and use* of such things, as *gratifie* and *delight* them, whether that *inveigling delight*, which causes such *excess* of *use*, *and desire*, be
   1. In *Meats*, and our desire, and use of them, both as to their *quantity* and *quality*, is moderated by *Temperance*.
   2. In *Drinks*, and the like moderation there is by *Sobriety*, more particularly so called.
   3. In other *bodily pleasures* which are particularly called *Lust*, and our bodily desires and use of them are moderated by *Chastity*. And the (*c*) ability to contain our selves, and to restrain the violence of our desires herein, is called *Continence*.
   4. In *Riches* and *Honours*, and the desire, and use of these are moderated, by *contempt of the World*, and *contentedness*.

   In our bodily desires, and use of all these things, by reason of the unbridled temper of our bodily Appetites, which stop at no bounds, nor ever know when they have enough, we are in great danger to *exceed*: And therefore our desires and use of them stand in need to be *moderated* and retrenched by these Virtues, that it may appear we understand and act, not as *Brute Beasts*, who have nothing else but *bodily appetite* to guide them; but as *Men*, who have wise Souls presiding in Flesh, to keep the exorbitant inclinations of our Bodies within *decency* and *due bounds*: Which Souls moreover, as we shew by such actions, are of an *immortal* and *invaluable* nature, whose *interest* thereof is *infinitely dearer* to us, and calls *incomparably more for our care* and pains, than our *Bodies* either *do*, or in *reason ought to call* for.
2. Of their aversation and avoidance of such things, as grieve and trouble them. Whether that matter of our bodily avoidance be,
   1. The *troubles* and *losses*, that are laid in the *way of our Duty*; and our avoidance of these is moderated, by the Duty of *taking up the Cross*.

2. The

(c) Ἐγκράτεια, is that whereby a Man κατέχειν δύναται τὸ λογισμῷ τὴν ὀδυνίαν ἐμμόναν ἐπὶ φαύλας ἡδονάς. Andron. Rh. lib. περὶ παθῶν.

2. The *irksome pains* which we take in *going through it*, and performing it; and our avoidance of this is moderated, by the Vertues of *diligence* and *watchfulness*.
3. The *great evils* which we have already *fallen* under, and are suffering for it; and our avoidance and flight of these is moderated and restrained, by *patience*.

Our *hatred* and *avoidance* of all these evils, which in themselves are naturally prone to be excessive, are so to be moderated and over-ruled by these Vertues, that all the world may see how we are not acted as the *brute Beasts* are, by *meer sense* and *appetite*, which know no Rules of *decency*, nor stop at any *limits*; but *know* and *do* as *becomes men*, who are endowed with *spiritual* and *discerning Souls*, which understand how to give *Laws*, and prescribe *Rules of decency* to our fleshly Appetites, and whose *sins* are far *worse evils*, than any, or all the sufferings which can befal our Bodies: So that to *keep back from them*, we will not *avoid* and *fly from these*, but willingly *embrace* and *undergo them*.

And to *enable* us the better thus to *moderate* all the desires and aversations, and to *keep perfectly under Command*, and within just bounds, these *naturally extravagant* tendencies and propensions of our Flesh; we must curb and keep it in, and *dead in great degrees*, not only its *immoderate* and *excessive*, but also its *innocent* eagerness and *inclinations*, lest they become a Snare to us, and acquire so much strength by our indulgence of them, as will carry us on to gratifie them at other times when they are not innocent, but sinful; which, but for such *curbing* and *conquest* of them, they would be sure to do. And this is done by the *general* Vertues of *mortification* and *self-denyal*.

The great matter indeed, and principal Object of *mortification* and *self-denyal*, is our *sinful appetites*, and such *disobedient actions* as we are tempted and drawn into, by the *untamed inclinations* of our Bodies. And this S. *Paul* affirms, is an indispensible Duty, and a Vertue of *absolute necessity* unto life. *If ye live after the Flesh*, saith he, *you shall die*; *but if you through the Spirit*

rit do mortifie the DEEDS *of the Body, you shall live*, Rom. 8. 13.

But as our *sinful* and *disobedient appetites*, are the prime Object of all religious *self-denyal* and *mortification*, and that which is *absolutely necessary*, as the end: So likewise are our *innocent appetites* an inferiour object of it, and our *mortification of them* is a necessary *means* and *instrument*, without which we shall never be able to *mortifie the other*. For a *free allowance* of our bodily desires in all things *lawful*, and an *unlimited gratification* of them in all instances whatsoever where they are *innocent*, would certainly prove a *Snare* to us, and betray us into a like indulgence and satisfaction of them in some Cases, where they are *sinful* and *disobedient*.

And the reason of this is plain, because if we should *gratifie* them in all things where we may *lawfully*, and never deny them any thing but what is *sinful*; they must needs come, by long use and indulgence, to *rule* in us, and to have a great Power and Empire over us. By indulgence and custom, they will grow strong, and we shall find it a matter of great *difficulty* to put them by, and a very *painful task* to *deny* them any thing; so that whithersoever they lead us, it is odds but we shall follow them. But now as for their Parts, they make no difference between an *innocent* and a *sinful* enjoyment: They do not distinguish things into *good* and *evil*, they are not moved by *Law* and *Decency*, but by *Pleasure*; and desire what is *delightsome* and *agrees with them*, whether it happen to be *allow'd* to them, or *forbidden*. So that let them but once be strong, and come to rule in us, and they will over-rule us in instances which are *prohibited*, as well as in those which are *allowed*; and make us fulfil them in things *sinful*, as well as in things *innocent*. And therefore we must learn to mortifie and deny our Bodily Appetites in all instances, that they may be weak and governable in all instances; and that we may have the Rule of them in all, and they not have the Rule of us in any.

And this *mortification* and *denyal* of our *lawful* and *innocent* bodily Appetites, being thus plainly necessary to the *denyal* and *mortification* of our *sinful* and *unlawful bodily desires and actions*; our Lord Jesus Christ, who best understood

understood the necessities of our Nature, what instruments were most necessary, and what means most proportionate for us, has inacted it into a Law. So that now 'tis every Man's Duty to *mortifie* and *deny*, not only all *sinful bodily actions and desires*; but, so far as is necessary unto that, all such as are innocent and lawful also. And according to the different degrees of Men's progress herein, are their different perfections in Vertue, and their different measures of security and assurance that they shall continue in it. It being only the *unmortifiedness* of their fleshly desires, which can prove a Snare to them, and a dangerous temptation; *Every man*, as S. *James* says, being *tempted then, when he is drawn away of his own Lusts, and inticed*, Jam. 1. 14.

And all the forenamed Vertues, *viz. Temperance, Sobriety, Chastity, &c.* are Duties incumbent upon us, and implied in that care, which this general Vertue *Sobriety* takes of our meaner Part, our *Bodies*.

And then, as for what more directly concerns our Souls, that *dueness* and *decency* which *Sobriety* prescribes in their Actions, and towards them, is either,

1. In *thinking no better* of our selves than we *deserve*, but having a *just* sense of all our *weaknesses*, and *defects*; which is *Humility* and *lowliness* of Mind.
2. In *taking* all that *just care* and thoughtfulness after their *future Good* and *Happiness*, which their *worth* requires; which is *Heavenly-mindedness*, or contriving and designing for the things of Heaven.

And as he has commanded us to exercise all these *Vertues* towards our *own selves*, whether in relation to our Souls, or Bodies; so has he as strictly forbid us to act those *Vices*, which are contrary to them: As are these that follow.

First, To *Humility*, or lowliness of Mind, is opposed,

1. An *over-high* conceit of our own *excellence* and *preheminence* above others, making us *set our selves* and *strive to appear above them*, and (d) *contemn* and *despise them* as persons that are *below us*; Which is *Pride*.

(d) Ὑπερηφανία is καταφρόνησις τῶν πλὴν αὐτοῦ τῶν ἄλλων, Theoph. Char. Ethic. c. 25.

2. An

2. An outward expression of this, in making a *false* shew of more excellence than indeed we have, whether in *religious*, *natural*, or *civil* endowments, which implies (e) *Hypocrisie* joyn'd with *Pride*; and is called *Arrogance*, *Ostentation*, *Boasting*.

(e) ἀλαζωνεία and εἰρωνεία are reckoned by *Arist.* as the extremities of veracity, and speeches of a lye, ἀλάζων he says is one, who is προσποιήτικος τοῦ ἐνδέξων καὶ μὴ ὑπαρχόντων ἢ μειζόνων ἢ ὑπάρχει, Ethic. ad Nicom. l. 2. c. 7. & l. 4. c. 7. *Theophrastus* defines it to be a raising a greater opinion of us than we really deserve, προσδοκία τινῶν ἀγαθῶν ἐφ' ἑαυτῷ, Char. Ethic. c. 24. And Hesych. explains ἀλάζων by ψευδής, ἢ ἐπὶ ἄλης, *i. e.* πλανήτης ζῶν.

3. An industrious affecting in all things by setting out our own praise, and exposing our atchievements, to get the honour and praise of others answerable to the conceit which we have of our own selves; which is *vain-glory*.

4. A restless pursuit of *honour* and *great Places*, which we conceit our selves to be worthy of; which is *Ambition*.

And the effects of this *pride* and *elation* of mind are,

1. In our *behaviour*, a *scornful* and *contemptuous* disrespect and sleight of others; which is *haughtiness*. And if it go on to an *unusual* and enormous degree, it is *insolence*. And this *haughtiness* when it is expressed in a *commanding* way, as if we had *Lordship* and *Authority* over them, is *imperiousness*. Which when 'tis shewn in exacting their submission to our *dogms* or *opinions*, is *dogmaticalness*, or *impatience of contradiction*.

2. In our *Speeches* of others, an *envious depression* and disparagement of them, the better to set off our own selves, which is *backbiting*.

3. In our *Conversation*, a mixture of *pride* and *envy*, or an (f) *envious provoking strife* of *out-doing* others and being better thought of our selves, or of *hindring* their designs, lest they should enjoy what we, who in our own opinion deserve it better, are deprived of; which is *emulation*.

(f) ζηλοῖ σθένει ἐρίζει, μιμεῖται, Hesych.

Secondly, To *heavenly-mindedness*, is opposed an *over-industrious care* of present things; or being *wholly*, or *chiefly* taken up with this World; which is *worldliness*.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, To *moderation* is opposed *luxury* or *excess*. And as that moderation which sobriety prescribed was either in *meats* or *drinks*, &c. So is this breach of *sobriety* in *excess* likewise. For,

First, To *temperance* is opposed *intemperance*, which when it is a Luxury,

1. In the *quantity* of Meat is called *Gluttony*.
2. In the *deliciousness* or *quality* of it, is called *Voluptuousness*.

Secondly, To *sobriety*, or a moderate and undisturbing use of Drink, is opposed a stupifying and intoxicating use of it: which is *Drunkenness*. And this, when it is accompanied with (g) *boisterousness*, *unchast Songs*, and *riotous mirth*; is called *revelling*.

(g) κῶμοι· ἀσελγῆ, ἄσματα πορνικά· κωμασης, τευφῶν μετ' ἀυδῆς. Hesych.

Thirdly, To *Chastity* is opposed *unchastness* and that weakness which betrays us into it, *viz.* our *subjection* to our bodily Lusts, and inability to contain them within due bounds, is called *incontinence*: Which issues out and expresses it self,

1. In preparatory enticements, by an *indulgence* to *provoking gestures*, *touches*, *words* or *action*; which is called *lasciviousness* or *wantonness*. The particular expression whereof in obscene and (*h*) shameful words, is *filthiness*. And if they be uttered in picquancy of wit, and smartness of conceit, it is *foolish* or (*i*) *obscene* Jesting.

(h) αἰσχρὰ τὰ αἰσχύνην ἐνεγκεῖν δυνάμενα, Hesych.

2. In the acting or execution of it; which may be done,
   1. By one Person, upon their own Body alone; and then 'tis *impurity* or *uncleanness*.
   2. By two Persons, each with other. Which if they are both Men, is called *Sodomy*; and by S. *Paul*, Rom. 1. 27. *Men with Men working that which is unseemly*; and the Persons who are guilty of it are call'd the *abominable*, Rev. 21. 8. And the Persons suffering themselves to be so abused, are called the *effeminate*, 1 Cor. 6. 9.

(i) ἐκτεταμηλία, αἰσχρολογία, μωρολογία, Hesych.

But if they be Man and Woman, then either,

1. One, or both are married to another; and so 'tis *Adultery*.
2. Both are unmarried, and so it is *Fornication*. Which if it be, 1. By

1. By the *joint-consent* of both, is *Whoredom*, or *bare Fornication*; and this, when the Parties are too nearly allied, is called *Incest*.
2. By forcing of one; and then 'tis *Rape* or *Ravishing*. Which Vice S. *Paul* expresses by that (*k*) word which we translate *Extortioners*, 1. *Cor.* 5. 11. and *Chap.* 6. 10.

(k) ἅρπαγες.

Fourthly, To *contempt* of the Wor'd and *contentment* with our present condition, is opposed *covetousness*, which is an immoderate love of the World, or an unsatisfiedness with what we have, and an (*l*) insatiable desire of more; and *grudging* or *repining*.

(l) πλεονεξία.

Fifthly, To *taking up the Cross*, is opposed our being *scandalized*, or turn'd out of the way of Duty and Obedience, by reason of it; or a *politick* and *selfish deserting* of our *Duty* to *avoid the Cross*.

Sixthly, To *diligence* and *watchfulness* in doing of our Duty, is opposed a heedlesness of it, and remiss application to it; which is *carelessness* and *idleness*.

Seventhly, To *patience* in suffering for it, is opposed an immodetate dread of pain, and dishoneſt avoidance of it; which is *softness* and *fearfulness*.

Eighthly, To *mortification* and *self-denyal*, is opposed *self-love* and *self-pleasing*; which, as it is an industrious care to please and gratifie our bodily *senses*, is called *sensuality*; and as it is a ready and constant serving and obeying the lusts and desires of the Flesh; especially when they carry us against the Commands of God, is called *Carnality*.

These are those *Vices* and breaches of Duty towards *our selves*, which God's Laws have *prohibited* under the pains of Death and Hell: As the other were such *Virtues*, as under the same penalty he *exacts* of us.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of LOVE the Epitome of Duty towards God and Men, and of the Particular Law comprehended under Piety towards God.

FOR the *two* remaining Members in S. *Paul's* Division, *viz. Godlineſs* or *Piety*, and *Righteouſneſs*, which require ſomething from us to *God* or to our *Neighbour*; they may yet be reduced into a narrower compaſs, and are both comprized in that one word *LOVE*. For all that God requires of us, either towards *himſelf* or towards *other Men*, is only *heartily* and *effectually* to *LOVE* them. And this *abridgment* of our whole Duty, in reſpect of theſe *two* remaining parts of it towards *God* and *Man*, into that *one* compendious Law of *LOVE*, is no more, than what our Saviour *Chriſt*, and his Apoſtle *Paul*, have already made to our hands. For hear how they ſpeak of it: *Jeſus ſaith unto the Lawyer, Thou ſhalt LOVE the Lord thy God, with all thy Heart, and all thy Soul, and all thy Mind. This is the firſt and great Commandment: and the ſecond is like unto it, Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf. On theſe two*, which in the thing commanded, *LOVE*, are but one, *hang all the Law* (of the ten Commandments, *viz.* which meddle not with our Duty towards our ſelves, but only towards God and our Neighbour) *and the Prophets*, Matt. 22. 37, 38, 39, 40. And S. *Paul* ſpeaks home to the ſame purpoſe: *By Love*, ſays he, *ſerve one another*; *for all the LAW is fulfilled in one word, even this, Thou ſhalt LOVE thy Neighbour as thy ſelf*, Gal. 5. 13, 14. And ſpeaking again of the Laws concerning our Neighbour, he tells us, that *LOVE worketh no ill to his Neighbour*, and *therefore LOVE is the fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. 13. 10.

Thus kind and good natur'd a *Religion*, is that of our Saviour Chriſt; A *Religion*, that is not content to have only *great* and *eminent meaſures of goodneſs* in it, but is *perfectly made up* of *LOVE* and *good Nature*. All that it requires from us, is only to be *kind-hearted*, and full of good Offices both towards *God* and *Men*. Every

Man of a *loving good Nature*, is inclined by his *temper* to do all that is demanded by *God's Law*; so that he has nothing remaining to turn his *Temper* into *Obedience*, but to *direct* his *intention*: and to exert all the effects of love for the sake of God's Commandment, which he is otherwise strongly excited to by the natural Propensions of his own Mind. His own Passion and his God require the same service, and that which is only a natural fruit of the first, may become, if he so design it, a piece of Religion and Obedience to the latter. For the particular effects of *Love*, are the particulars of our *Duty*. *Love* is the great and *general Law*, as *ill-will* and enmity are the *prime transgression*: And the instances of Love are the instances of our Obedience, as all the particular effects of ill-will are those very instances wherein we disobey. So that by running over all the special effects of Love or ill-will, we may quickly find what are the Particulars of Duty and Transgression.

Now the prime and most immediate Effects of *Love* are,

1. To do no *evil* to the Persons beloved, nor to take away from them any thing which is theirs, and which they have a right to. And this founds all the Duties of *Justice*. But,
2. To do all *good Offices* and shew *kindness* to them, which founds all the Duties of *Charity*.

And these two take in our whole Duty, both in *Piety* towards God, and also in *Righteousness* towards Men.

1. The proper and genuine effect of *love to God*, is to do no *evil*, but with great readiness to do *all the good* and *service* which we can for him: In which two are implied all the branches of *Piety*, which is the great and general Duty towards him.

To be *kind* and *serviceable* to God, is nothing more than to honour him. For his nature is so perfect and self-sufficient, that it cannot receive; and ours so impotent and poor, that we cannot give any thing else but Honour to him. As on the other side, to do *evil* to him, is only to *Dishonour* him. For he is out of our power as for any other injury, and there is no way possible left for us to reach him, but by only our contumelious usage and disrespect for him.

To

To do no *evil*, I say, but to be *kind* and *serviceable* to God, is nothing more but to *honour* him. It implies our having in our *Minds honourable opinions of him*, and expressing in our *carriage* and *behaviour* a *respect* and *acknowledgment* of those *glorious Attributes* and *Perfections* which are in him. The former, *viz.* the *high opinion* of his *Excellencies*, those particularly which are instances of *Power* and *Goodness*, in our *Minds*, is called *Honour*. The latter, *viz.* the *expressions* of this honourable opinion and acknowledgment in our *Thoughts*, *Words* and *Actions* is called *Worship*.

And this *Worship* is an acknowledgment either,

1. Of his *Truth* and *Knowledge*, in believing his Word, and taking things upon his Authority, seeing he neither *can* be deceived himself, nor *will* deceive us; which is *Faith*.
2. Of his Power and Goodness,
   1. In our *good will* or kind affection for him as a most *beneficial* and *lovely* Being, which is called *LOVE*. And this, as it effects a warm concernedness for his *honour*, chiefly when any thing opposes it, is *zeal*.
   2. In *relying* on him for the supply of our wants, as one that is most *able* and *ready* to relieve them, which is *trust* and *dependance*. A particular effect whereof is a *hopeful making known* our desires to him, in begging such good things at his hands as we stand in need of; which is *Prayer*.
3. Of his *bounty* and *beneficence*, in a *grateful* sense, and affectionate owning, that all the good things which we receive proceed from him; which is *thankfulness*.
4. Of his *Power* and *Justice*, in an *awful backwardness* to offend him, in regard he will not excuse, and can most severely punish all Offenders; which is *fear*.
5. Of his *Wisdom*, and *Rule* or *Authority* over us.
   1. In *acquiescing in his Disposals*, as being most wise and most authoritative; which is *submission* or *resignedness*.
   2. In *performing his Commands*, as requiring things most fit for us, and most due from us; which is *Obedience*.

These are those particular effects, which flow from our *love of God*, and which make up that part of Duty, which he requires from us towards *himself*.

And opposite to this *love of God*, and these *effects* and expressions of it, which are made our Duty, and particularly commanded under this Head, are our *ill-will* and *hatred* of him, with all the particular ways of expressing it, which are the contrary instances of sin, and those very Vices that are forbidden.

Now God, as I said, being out of our reach as to any possible way of being injured by us, or suffering evil from us, otherwise than by our *vilifying* him, and lessening of his *Honour*: The prime effect of our hatred of him can be no other than our *Dishonouring* him. And this may be instanced,

1. In *denying* either his *Being* or *Existence*, that he *is God*; which is *Atheism*: Or his *Cognizance*, and *Government* of the World, and of the Actions of Men, in order to reward or punish them; which is *Epicurism* or *denying Providence*.
2. In *thinking* or *speaking reproachfully* of him, which is *Blasphemy*. And this, when it is such a *disfiguration* of his *Being* or *Nature*, as instead of a most just, wise, and lovely God, sets him out for an *arbitrary* and *unwise* one, and such as Men may *dread* and * *hate*, but *cannot love* him; is *Superstition*.

* Δεισιδαιμονία, says *Theophrastus*, is Δειλία πρὸς τὸ δαιμόνιον, Char. Eth. c. 17. ὁ εὐσεβὴς φίλος θεῷ, ὁ δὲ δεισιδαίμων κόλαξ θεοῦ. ὁ μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν τοῖς θεοῖς ἄχθεται, ὁ δὲ μέλα πολλὰ λύει σύνεσπις καὶ δεδιὼς τοὺς θεοὺς ὥσπερ τοὺς τυράννους, *Maximus Tyrius Dissert.* 4. Agreeably whereto *Plutarch* says in *Alexandro*, ἐκ εἴωται ὁ ἄθεος θεοὺς εἶναι, ὁ δὲ δεισιδαίμων ἐ βούλεται.

† The Idolatrous Images mention'd *Isa.* 44. are called a Lye, v 20. & *Hos.* 7.1. *Jer.* 13. 25. in which sense 'tis true of the *Romans*, that in changing the Glory of the incorruptible God into an Image made like to a corruptible Man; they turned the Truth of God into a Lye, *Rom.* 1. 23, 25.

3. In *having other Gods* besides him; or worshipping *him alone*, by *false* and † *lying* Similitudes and *limiting* Resemblances (such as all *material Images* are) not in *true* and *spiritual* manner as he is a God, which is *Idolatry*. And for the former sort of *Idolatry*, viz. *worshipping other Gods besides him*, if it be a *worshipping of wicked Spirits*, and that by *contracting with them*; it is *witchcraft* or *sorcery*.

4. In

4. In *acting croſs* to all his *honourable Attributes* and Perfections, and *behaving* our ſelves in ſuch *diſreſpectful ſort*, as inſtead of *honouring* and *acknowledging* him, doth *diſown* and reproach them.

And theſe Actings are either,

1. *Inwardly in our Minds*, when by ſome work of theirs we deny or reproach either,
   1. His *Truth* and *Knowledge*, by *giving no heed* to what he ſays, nor taking any notice of it, but continuing ignorant of his word and pleaſure; which the Apoſtle calls *fooliſhneſs*; An effect whereof is *acting* againſt it *raſhly* and inconſiderately, which is *headineſs*. Or, when we do know it, by *giving no credit* or aſſent to it, but doubting of it or diſtruſting it; which is *unbelief*.
   2. His Power and Goodneſs.
      1. By our *ill-will* and *wiſhes* to him, when we *grieve* at any thing that makes *for him*, and take *delight* in ſuch things as we our ſelves or others can deviſe, either *againſt himſelf*, or againſt Vertue and Goodneſs, which he owns above all things and is moſt tender of, as bearing his own Image; and this is called *hating of God*. Which, as 'tis ſhewn in an unconcernedneſs at ſuch things, as diſhonour and affront him, or his Religion; is *coldneſs* or *want of zeal*.
      2. By our *diſtruſt* of *him* and his *Providence* when we *dare not rely* upon him for a ſupply of thoſe things which we ſtand in need of, as if he were either *careleſs*, and mattered not what becomes of us; or *envious*, and grudged to have any of thoſe good things which we want to befal us; which is *diſtruſt*. One effect whereof is our omitting to *ſeek* unto him, as *expecting nothing* from him; which is *not praying to him*.
   3. His *bounty* and *beneficence*, by an *utter diſregard* of what he doth for us, when we either *wholly overlook* it, or after ſome ſmall time *forget* it, and are not touched with any grateful ſenſe or affectionate reſentments upon it; which is *unthankfulneſs*.

4. His *Power* and *Justice*, by a *bold venturing* upon any thing that offends him, as if we neither valued his *favour*, nor *displeasure*; which is *fearlessness*.

2. *Outwardly*, In *our Life and Practice*, when by something in them we reproach and vilifie either

1. His *Wisdom* and *Authority*.

1. In *disputing* and *striving* against his *Dispofals*, when we quarrel at them as unwisely ordered, and would correct and better them our selves; which is *contumacy* or *repining*.

2. In *breaking his Commands*, when we *reject* his pleasure, and *prefer* our own; which is *Disobedience*.

2. His *Name*, when we use it *irreverently*, by invoking or calling upon him to judge us according to our *faithfulness* in what we speak, either *customarily* and *lightly*, upon trivial or no occasions; which is *common swearing*: Or *falsly* when we either at present *mean*, or afterwards *perform* no such thing, as we *promised* or *affirmed* before him; which is *perjury* or *forswearing*.

3. His *Word*, or *Ministers*, or *other* things *consecrated* to him, when we *treat* and use them as *cheap* as *common* things, in a *careless unmannerly* way, or as it often happens in *mirth* and *mockery*; which is *prophaneness*.

And these are such expressions and effects of our hatred of God, as make up the Body of *impiety*, or transgressions *immediately* against *God himself*, all which he has most strictly *forbidden*.

And then as for the

2. Sort of Love, our love to *Men*; it implies in it all the Duties contained in the third Branch of *St. Paul's* Division, *viz. Righteousness*; as shall be shewn in the *next* Chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of the particular Duties contained under Justice and Charity.

FOR the third general Duty, *Righteousness*, or our Duty towards our *Neighbour*; our *love of Men* will lead us into the several Laws which it containeth. Whilst in every matter, wherein we are concern'd with them, we have Love for them, we have no Temptation to commit any Sin against them, nor are in Danger of failing in any point of our Duty towards them. *He that loveth his Brother*, says S. *John*, *abideth in light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him*, 1 Joh. 2. 10. For the first effect of love, *our doing no hurt or injury to any Man*, founds all the Laws of *Justice*; and the latter *our doing good and shewing all kindness*, founds all the particular Laws of *Charity*; in which two, are comprehended all those several Duties, which God has enjoyned towards *other Men*.

The first, I say, founds all the particular Laws of *Justice*. For in that we do no *evil* or *injury* to our Neighbour, nor hurt him by prejudicing his *just Rights*, or taking away from him any thing that is his; is implied that we do not wrong or endamage him,

1. In his *Life*, by taking it away either,
   1. In *private force* and *violent assassination*, which is *Murder*.
   2. Under colour of *Justice*; by a false charge of *capital* crimes; which is *false-witness* joyned to *Murder*, taking away at once both his Life and Reputation too.
2. In his *Reputation*, by sullying or impairing it through a *lying* and false imputation of disparaging things to him; which is *slander* or *calumny*.
3. In his *belief* and *expectation*, by reproaching and abusing it, either,
   1. By *deceiving* him against his *Right*, to his hurt, in a false speech of what is past, or present; which is *lying*.
   2. By frustrating his expectations, which were raised by our promise of something that is to come; which is *unfaithfulness* or *perfidiousness*.

4. In his *Bed*, by invading that, which the Contract of Marriage has made inviolable; which is *Adultery*.
5. In his *Goods* or Estate; and all wrong herein proceeds, from our *unsatisfiedness* with our own, and our *greedy longing* and ungovernable desire of that which is his; which is *Covetousness*. The effects and instances whereof are,

1. In *taking* away from him that which is his, either,
   1. *Directly*. By secret or open force, and without his knowledge and consent; which is *stealing* or *robbery*; or by giving in a false Testimony against him in Courts, to get the same under colour of Law and Justice; which is a Complication of *Lying*, *Forswearing*, and *Robbing*, and is *bearing False witness*.
   2. *Indirectly*, Or by *forcing his allowance*, and extorting a necessitated consent from him. Which is done by taking advantage
      1. Of his *impotence*, and inability to resist and contend with us; which is *Oppression*.
      2. Of his *Necessity*, when he cannot be without something which we have, and so is forced to take it upon our own terms; which is *extortion* and *depressing in bargaining*.
      3. Of his *ignorance*, when we out-wit him, and trepan and over-reach him in Bargaining and Commerce; which is *Circumvention*, *Fraud* or *Deceit*. The *wilyness* and subtle Art wherein is called *Craftiness*.
3. In *denying* all kindnesses and good things to him in *unmercifulness*, *uncharitableness*, &c. Of which I shall discourse under the next Head.

All these particulars of *Justice* now mentioned, are natural effects of *Love to our Neighbour*, in as much as it makes us keep off from offering any *injury*, or doing any *evil* to him. Upon which account S. *Paul* says of it, that as for these particular Laws of *Justice*, it *fulfils* them *all*. Which he shews by an induction of such Particulars, as I have named. *He that loveth another*, saith he, *hath fulfilled the Law*, *viz.* that part of it which requires Duties of Justice towards others. *For this*, *Thou shalt not commit Adultery*, *thou shalt not Kill*, *thou shalt*

not

not Steal, thou shalt not bear false Witness, thou shalt not Covet; which are the five last Commandments of the Decalogue: *and if there be any other Commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this Saying, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* Now *Love worketh no ill*, neither these nor any other, *to his Neighbour*; *therefore Love is the fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. 13. 8, 9, 10.

And as this first effect of Love to our Neighbour, *viz. its keeping us back from offering any injury or doing any evil to him*, contains in it all the Laws of *Justice*: So doth its other effect; *our doing all good offices, and shewing kindness to them*, comprehend in it all the particular Laws of Charity, wherewith we stand obliged towards other Men.

Love is not only *innocent* and *harmless*, and careful to create no trouble, nor occasion any prejudice; but moreover it is all *kindness*, *benevolence* and *good nature*, and *diligent* in creating all the *pleasure* and *delight* it can to its *beloved*.

Now this *goodness*, *kind heartedness*, *or desire to please and delight others*, will be an *universal* cause of *beneficence* or doing good to them, and make us cast to please them in so many ways, and advantage them in so many relations, as we can at any time be placed in. In *particular*, it will effect these Vertues in the *Cases* following:

1. As *to what we see them to be in themselves*, and in this respect it produces in us,
   1. If they are *worthy* and *vertuous*, a *great Opinion* and venerable esteem for them; which is *Honour*.
   2. If they have *honest Hearts*, but yet are *weak in Judgment* and *Knowledge*, a *compassionate sense* of their weakness, and an endeavour to relieve them; which is *pity* and *succour*.

   And if this *weakness* be instanced in *judging* those things to be a *matter of Sin*, and so *unlawful* for them to do, which no *Law of God* has *forbidden*; and which therefore we, *who better understand* it, see plainly that we *lawfully may do*; and *our practice* of it *before them*, who, distrusting their own skill, are swayed more by our example than by their own Opinions, would draw *them* on to *practise* it too, though their own *Conscience condemns* it, which would be to them a *sin*; in this Case the way of Loves affording *pity* and *succour*,

is

is by making us *foregoe the lawful practice* of it at that time; which is *restraining of our Christian Liberty for our Brothers edification.*

For this *Vertue* there was great place in the *Apostles Times*, among the *Christianized Jews.* For the Jewish Law placed *Religion* in *forbearing* certain sorts of *Meats* as *unclean* and *unlawful*; and particularly in *abstaining from Meats offered to, and set before an Idol God*, as it was in the *Gentile Sacrifices*; part whereof was afterwards very often brought to the Shambles, to be sold there, as other Meat was, for the use of private Tables, where they would scruple to eat of it, who still retain'd their *Jewish* Opinions. And the *simpler* sort and *weaker* People, who had all along placed so much Religion in these things, could not be brought over without much *patience* of *instruction*, and a *long usage*, to know and see that *Liberty*, which they had obtained, either to *use*, or *forbear* these meats upon their becoming *Christians.* And whilst the judgments and opinions of many good People, were in *these* things thus *weak*; the *Apostles*, (that they might secure the *innocency* of their *practice* under their *errour*, and prevent their being *scandalized* or *drawn on to do what themselves condemned as evil*, through the *authority* of other Men's *Examples*, whom they looked upon as *wiser Christians*,) are wont very much to press this part of *Charity, our using of our Christian Liberty*, not in all things for our own ease, but for our *weak Brethrens edification.* Particularly S. *Paul* is earnest in it, *Rom.* 14. and 1 *Cor.* 8.

3. If they are *wicked* and vicious, this *kind-heartedness* will effect in us a *pious admonition* to reduce and reclaim them; which is *friendly reproof.*

And whether they be *good* or *evil*, *weak* or *strong*; it will produce an *affectionate tenderness* and concern for them, such as we have for those of our own Blood and near kindred; which is *Brotherly kindness.*

2. As to what *we see them receive from others.* And in this respect, this kindness and desire to please effects in us,

1. If

1. If it were *good*, an expreſſion of *pleaſure* and *rejoycing* in it; which is *Congratulation.*
2. If *evil*, then
   1. If we *cannot redreſs* and *remove* it, it will make us help to *bear* it, in concern and *ſorrow* for it; which is *Compaſſion.*
   2. If we *can*, it makes us *relieve* and eaſe them of it. Which it doth if the evil be
      1. Of *want*, by *ſupplying* it according to our *power*; which is *Alms* and *Diſtribution.*
      2. Of *diſgrace*, by *endeavouring to hide* and ſmother it, where it is *deſerved*; which is *covering* and *concealing of our Brethren's defects*; and by *confuting* and wiping it off, where we know they have not *deſerved* it; which is *vindicating our Neighbours injured reputation.*
3. As to that *place and quality, which they bear in reſpect of us*, this *kindneſs* and *deſire to pleaſe* will exert it ſelf, if they are perſons
   1. *Below* us, in a *freedom of acceſs*, and eaſineſs of being ſpoke with; which is *affability* or *graciouſneſs.*
   2. *Equal* to us or *below* us, in a *readineſs* * *to do good Offices*, and to make their concern our own; which is *courteouſneſs* or *officiouſneſs.* And in purſuit of this, in *ſtooping down* to ſome things *below* our *Rank* and *Quality*, either in words or actions; which is *condeſcenſion.*

   And if this *courteſie* be uſed towards *Strangers*, and expreſſed in *entertaining them at our own houſe*; 'tis *hoſpitality.*

   * χρηστότης ſays *Andronicus Rhodius*, is ἕξις ἐκκεκλιμένως ὑποπτικὴ, lib. περὶ παθῶν.

   3. Towards *all men whomſoever* we converſe with, it will beget
      1. A *quietneſs of temper*, and *tameneſs of intercourſe*; which is called *gentleneſs.*
      2. A *fair interpretation*, and putting the beſt ſenſe upon any thing, that is done, or ſpoken by them; which is *candor.*
      3. A *maintenance of good agreement* and correſpondence with them; which is *unity.*
   4. And as to what we *our ſelves* receive from others; this *kindneſs of nature* and *deſire to pleaſe* will produce,

1. If

1. If it were *good*, a *grateful sense* and *affectionate resentment* of it, with a *longing desire* to *requite* it; which is *thankfulness*.
2. If *evil* and *injury*; then it will effect,
   1. * *Slowness* to take *provocation*, and to be angry at it; which is *meekness* or *lenity*.

* πραότης is a vertue that makes us ἡύνδους.

φέρειν ἐγκλήματα καὶ ὀλιγωρίας μέτριος, καὶ τὸ μὴ ταχέως ὀργᾶν ὅπῃ τὴν τιμωρίαν, τὸ μὴ εὐκίνητον πρὸς ὀργάς· ἄπτεσθαι δὲ τῷ ἤθει καὶ ἀφλόνεικον. Andron. Rhod. lib. περὶ παθῶν.

   2. When the wrong is such, that we may *justly* and *reasonably* be *angred* at it, an *easiness* of *being intreated*, and readiness to be appeased; which is *placableness*.
   3. And for the *requital* of the wrong, if it were,
      1. Only an *affront* of light injury, it makes us seek none, but pardon and put it up; which is *forgiving injuries*. And instead of that to render *kindness* in return to it, and such *good Offices* as are in our *power*, as *praying to God for them*, and *blessing*, or speaking all the good which we can of them as often as we have occasion to mention them, always are, which is *doing good to enemies*; or, as our Saviour says, *blessing them that curse us, and praying for our enemies*, Matt. 5. 44.
      2. Too *burthensome* or *scandalous* to be past over, so that 'tis fit to punish it: Then in exacting,
         1. *Punishment*, as being an unpleasant work, it makes us *bear long* before we come to it; which is *long-suffering*.
         2. *Satisfaction*, it suffers us not to go to the *utmost* of what might be exacted; but through a care of *our enemies*, as well as of *our selves*, to take up with such a competency, as is no more than they can *bear*; which is *mercifulness*.

These are such particular Laws of Charity, as naturally flow from this effect of *love to men*, our *kindness and desire to benefit and please them*. And all these effects of love

love are parts of Duty towards them, and those several Precepts, which God has commanded us to keep and obey.

And as our *love of men* with this effect of it, *our desire to benefit* and pleasure them, includes in it all the instances of *Charity*: So doth our *hatred* of them, with a *delight to spite and trouble them*, which naturally flows from it, comprehend in it all the contrary instances of *uncharitableness*.

For this *ill-will* and *habitual hatefulness of temper*, will effect in us, (opposite to *goodness* and a *desire to please and delight others*,) an *universal mischievousness*, or forwardness to make others work, to put them to * pains and trouble, and create them sorrow; which is called *wickedness*. And this will express it self in creating our Neighbour discontent and vexation, in all those ways wherein we are concerned with him, or conversant about him.

* πονηρία ὁ ἐν παρασκευῇ εἰς πόνα παρὰ τὸ πονῶ πονέω, Suid. πονηρία meo judicio est *vitium animi, quo homo inclinatur ad nocendum aliis, etiam sine causa, sed ex quadam in malum proclivitate; qualis est malitia Dæmonis; quem ea de causa πονηρὸν appellamus.* Tolet. in Cap. 1. Ep. ad Rom. v. 29.

For instance,

1. As for any thing, which we see he has,
   - 1. Of *Vertue* and *Goodness*; instead of *honouring*, it will make us *wish ill* to him, and *set him at nought*; which is *hating* and *despising him*.
   - 2. Of *weakness* and *ignorance*; it will make us not to restrain our selves at all in the *use of our Christian Liberty*, for his sake; but to act to the utmost of what is lawful, though he be *scandalized* by it, or encouraged, upon the authority of our example, to commit what his own Conscience tells him is a sin; which is † *scandalizing*, or *making him to offend*.

† Scandal is an occasion of sin: *Let no man put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall σκάνδαλον in his Brothers way*, Rom. 14. 13.

2. As for what we see him do, or receive; if it be
   - 1. *Good*, it expresses it self in *grief* and *trouble* at it; which is *envy* or an *evil eye*.
   - 2. *Evil*, instead of raising *pity* and *compassion*, it makes us to take a *pleasure* in it, and to be *glad* of it; which is *rejoycing in evil*.

   And if the evil be
   - 1. Of *want*, it will effect a refusal of all supply; which is *uncharitableness*.
   - 2. Of *disgrace*; then if it were

1. *Unjust*

1. *Unjust* and *undeserved*, it lets it stick without any endeavours to wipe it off; which is *not vindicating him.*
2. *Just* and *truly chargeable*, or but any way *suspicious*, instead of *concealing*, it *publishes* and *proclaims* it in disparaging Characters, and Representations of him; which sort of detraction is *evil-speaking*.

This in the general, as it is shewn in a *forwardness to pass Sentence against men* in undervaluing and disparaging judgments upon what they do or say, overlooking all the Vertues, and detecting only the faults and failings of it, is *censoriousness*.

In the objecting and publishing whereof, from the different *manners* and *ends* of the publication, it passes under several names.

For as for the *manner*, if that publication be,

1. In their *absence*, in a *softer*, and, as it often happens, in a more *secret* way, under a pretence of favour and kindness to them to get a greater regard to what we say against them; 'tis *backbiting*. Which when it is not published *aloud*, nor spoken out for *any*, or *all* of the Company indifferently to hear; but is told in secret, to some *one*, or *more*; 'tis *whispering*.
2. Either in their *absence*, or *openly* and before their face, in a more *violent* and *severer* way, being expressed in † *bitter words*, and with great vehemence; 'tis *railing* or *reviling*.

† *Maledicto si petulantius jactatur, convitium est*, Cic. Orat. pro M. Cælio.

And as for the *end*, if that disparaging publication be

1. To make them *infamous*, by objecting to them,
   1. Our own *favours*; 'tis *upbraiding*.
   2. Their *failings*; 'tis *reproaching*.
2. To make them *ridiculous*, by exposing their *lesser* and more innocent infirmities, or such as have in them more of shame than mischief; 'tis called *mocking*.

3. As for that Place and Quality, which they bear in respect of us, this *forwardness* to *vex* and *distaste* them will have these effects.
   1. If they are Persons *below* us, it will exert it self in making us stately, and *hard to be spoken with*, contrary to *affability*; which is *difficulty of access*. And if this *inferiority* be, as we apprehend, in *Parts* or *Endowments*, it will effect a *contemptuous* and undervaluing *behaviour* towards them, expressed either in *words* or *actions*, for our *support* or *interest*; which is *affront* or *contumely*.
   2. If *equal* to us, or *below* us, in an *averseness* to all good Offices, and an *utter unconcernedness* for them, which is opposite to courtesy, and may be called *uncourteousness*. And as a further effect of this a *scorning* to *stoop* down to any thing *below* us, whereby we may serve or pleasure them; which is a mixture of *pride* and *ill nature*, opposite to *condescension*, and may be called *stiffness*. And if this *uncourteousness* be towards Strangers, and expressed in *denying* them *entertainment* when a *reasonable occasion* calls for it; 'tis *unhospitableness*.
   3. Towards *all Men* with whom we converse, it will beget,
      1. A *frowardness of temper*, and *imperious churlishness of intercourse*, opposite to *gentleness*; which is *surliness*.
      2. A *cross interpretation*, and † *perverting to an ill sense*, all that is done or spoken by them, opposite to *candour*: which is *malignity*.
      3. An *unquietness of behaviour*, in picking quarrels, and creating difference with them; which is *turbulence* and *unquietness*.

† κακοήθεια, ὅζι τὸ ὅπῃ τὸ χεῖρον ἀπολαμβάνειν ἅπαντα. *Arist. Rhet. l. 2. c. 13.*

4. As for what we receive from them, it will produce,
   1. If it were *good* and *beneficial*, an *utter disregard* of it, and unconcernedness of him who did it; which is *unthankfulness*.
   2. If *evil* and *injury*, then
      1. A *hasty catching* at the smallest provocation, and a *sudden violent* displeasure upon it, which is *passionateness*, *anger* or *fierceness*. The expressions whereof are, 1. In

1. In *strife* of arguing and debate, *variance*.
2. In *earnestness* and violent degree of heat, *bitterness*.
3. In *loudness* and noise of words, *clamour* or *brawling*.

2. When 'tis *once admitted*, a *retaining a lasting impression* of it in our minds, and malicious thoughts and designs against him who did it; which is *hatred*, *wrath*, *enmity* or *malice*.

3. A great difficulty in laying this conceived grudge aside, and being appeased when they seek for a reconciliation; which is *implacableness*.

4. An *impatient desire* of *requiting* the injury, and returning it upon him who offered it; which is *revenge*. Some particular expressions whereof are, instead of *blessing* or good language, and *praying for them*, a return of *cursing*, or reproachful speech and *imprecation*.

And in effecting this *requital*, it will produce in exacting,

1. *Punishment*, as being a most pleasant and desired work: *hastiness* and *impatience*, opposite to *long-suffering*.
2. *Satisfaction*, a going to the utmost limits of power and extremities of infliction; which is *rigour*.

And all these Particulars, as they are most natural effects, and expressions of *ill-will* and *hatred* towards *our Neighbour*, are transgressions also of the Law of *Charity* towards him, and so many several instances of disobedience, which under this Head of *uncharitableness* God has most straitly forbidden.

And from both these general Laws of *Justice* and *Charity to our Neighbour*, or our keeping off from all things that may offend and injure him, and doing all that may please or any way delight him, will result that *state of good agreement* and intercourse of friendliness, which is called *peace*. Which, as it implies an *union of minds* opposite to *Controversies* and *Disputes*, is called *unanimity*; and as containing an *agreeableness* and mutual correspondence of *hearts* and affections, *concord*.

In order to the procurement of this *peace*, there is required, 1. In

1. In the *temper*, such a mixture of *love* and *quietness* as renders Men *tame* and *contented* under the present state of things, and averse from contention and controversie; which is *peaceableness*.
2. In the *practice*, a doing such things as,

1. *Prevent strife*, whether that be done,
   1. Towards our *Equals* and *Inferiors*, by complying and bearing with their weaknesses, and going from our own Liberty where the exercise of it would give offence and cause difference; which is *condescension* and *compliance*.
   2. Towards our *Governours*, by keeping within our own Sphere, and medling only with those things which are parts of our own Duty, not incroaching upon their Office, or thrusting our selves into their Administration; which is *doing our own business*.
2. Compose and put an end to it, and this is done by *making amends*, and recompencing that *contumely* or *wrong* which occasion'd it; which is *satisfaction for injuries*.

And a care not only thus to preserve peace our selves but also to maintain it amongst others; by an *industrious endeavour* to keep up a right understanding and agreement amongst Men, and when they happen to differ, to reconcile them and make them friends again; is *peace-making*.

And then from the two *general* transgressions opposite to these, *viz. injustice* and *uncharitableness to our Neighbour*, or an industrious averseness from all things that may please and advantage him, and a forwardness in all things to hurt and vex him, will arise that *state of difference*, and intercourse of ill Offices, which is called *enmity*: Which as it implies a *separation and clashing of hearts* and affections; is called *discord*.

To the production of this evil state concurr

1. In the *temper*, such a mixture of *heat* and *ill-nature*, as renders Men restless under their present state, and pleased and delighted in scuffling and strife; which is *unpeaceableness*.

2. In the *practice*, a doing such things, as at first raise and engender, and afterwards foment and maintain it; and of this sort, besides all the instances of wrong and injustice, which we heard of before, is,

   1. An *envious strife* of being better thought of and out-doing one another; which is *emulation* or *provoking one another*.
   2. A *going beyond* our own *place* or *business*, and either *usurping* upon other mens *Offices*, or *sawcily intermedling* with their affairs; which is *Pragmaticalness*, or *being busie-bodies*. And this, when it is taken up in *reporting between the Parties at odds*, such things as we have heard or seen, which are fit still more to *exasperate* their Minds, and to *widen the Breach*, is *tale-bearing*. Which when it is of things, not only *seen*, but even *suspected*, and in a secret dissembled manner; is *whispering*.

      And if the Difference was at first occasioned by *injury* and *wrong*, that which goes most directly to continue it, is *avowing* what was done, and making no amends for the same; which is *not satisfying for injuries*.

And for the outward effects and expressions of this enmity and discord; it shews it self,

1. In a *struggling* for mastery and victory; which is *strife* or *contention*.
2. In *separating* themselves into *Parties* and *Companies*, according to the difference of their love or hatred, and of their espoused interests; which is *Division* or *Faction*. And this in *religious* affairs, when the obstinate espousal that leads on to it is of *damnable Opininions*, is *Heresie*; when of *needlesly separated Parties*, it is *Schism*.
3. A rude concourse of Parties in scuffling and blows; which is *Tumult*.

So

So that besides all the Particulars above-mentioned, which are contained under the general Heads, *Justice* and *Charity*, there is included moreover in this *third* Head of Duty, *Righteousness*, all these Laws of *Peace* which result from the combination of them both.

And as for all the things which are commanded or forbidden by all these Laws of *Justice*, *Charity* or *Peace*, they are due to our *Neighbour*, in the *greatest latitude* and *utmost generality* of that Name, as it signifies *any* whom we have to do with of *all mankind*.

The *Jews*, indeed were of a *narrower Spirit*, and of a more *contracted kindness*. They thought themselves bound to exercise all that Justice and Charity which their Law required, towards the *men of their own Nation*, or such of the *Gentiles*, who leaving their Heathen Idolatries would become *Proselytes*, and turn to their Religion. But as for all the world besides, they accounted themselves *disobliged* from all expressions of *kindness*, and *good affection* towards them; nay, even from *all intercourse of common civility*, and *conversation* with them. They would not so much as come under their Roof, or eat with them at the same Table, or either give or receive any civilities or friendly expressions from them. S. *Peter*, when he entred into the house of *Cornelius*, a *Gentile Centurion*, told them, that they *all knew very well, how it is not LAWFUL for any Man that is a JEW to KEEP COMPANY, or COME IN unto one of ANOTHER NATION*: For which cause he himself had not come to them, had not *God* taught him to correct his *Country-custom*, and *to call no man*, of what Nation soever, *common* or *unclean*, Acts 10. 28. And upon the account of this freedom which he then took, the *Christian Jews*, who were of the Circumcision, *contended with him when he came up to Jerusalem*, reproving him for this. That *he went into men uncircumcised, and did eat with them*, Acts 11. 2, 3. The Woman of *Samaria* wondred, that *Jesus*, *being a Jew*, should vouchsafe to *ask* so much as a Cup of cold *water* from *her who was a Samaritan*; this being the *stiffness* of the *Jewish Principle*, *To have no dealings with the Samaritans*, John 4. 9. Nay, to that height of unkindness had they arrived, as to *deny* even the most *common Offices of Humanity and Charity*, *to shew the way*, *or give directions for a journey* to any *Gentile*

man: Which several of the learned * Heathens have smartly reproved, and most justly complained of. All which they did upon a supposition, that the † *Neighbour*, to whom love and kindness was required by their Law, was only a *Fellow Jew*, a *Brother-Israelite*, and a *man of their own Nation*. Which *narrow* and *contracted sense* they thought they had good reason to fix upon it, from an expression in their own Law, *Lev.* 19. where in the repetition of this great and general Duty of *Love to our Neighbour*, the word *Neighbour*, is set in conjunction with, and explained by *one of the Children of their own People*. For thus 'tis said, *Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the Children of thy People, but thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* v. 18.

Thus *limited* and *confined* was the *Jewish Love*; God had chosen them out of all the Nations of the World for a *peculiar people*, and had hedged them in from the rest of mankind, by *peculiar Laws* and a *peculiar Government*. And upon this they concluded, that whatsoever God required of them, he did it as their *political King*, and as the *particular Head* of the Jewish Nation; and that he intended those Laws which he gave them, as Rules for their behaviour towards their *own Brethren*, and *Fellow Subjects*, not towards *Strangers* of Foreign Nations.

But as for our *Lord* and Sovereign *Jesus Christ*, he is a *Governour*, and has enacted all his Laws, not for the guidance of any *one Nation* or *People*, but of *all the World*. He told his Disciples when he sent them out to preach the Gospel, That *all power was given unto him both in Heaven and in Earth*; and thereupon commissioned them to *go out*, and proclaim his Laws, not to the *Jews* alone, but *to all Nations*, Mat. 28. 18, 19. And by this *universality* of his Empire, he has *taken away the partition-wall which was between Jews and Gentiles, having made them both one*, Ephes. 2. 14. So that now there can be no further colour or pretence for a limited and restrained affection; all the World by this means being now again made *one People*, *Fellow Subjects* and *Brethren*, and *Neighbours* unto one another.

Whatever the *Jews* conceived of their Laws therefore, 'tis plain that all the Laws of *Christ*, which commanded all manner of *Justice*, *Charity*, and *Peaceableness*, and forbid all expressions of *uncharitableness*, *injury*, and *unpeaceableness*

* *Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti: Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos.* Juv. Sat. 4. *Apud ipsos fides obstinata, misericordia in promptu: sed adversus omnes alios hostile odium.* Tac. Hist. l. 5.

† *Excipit omnes Gentiles, cum dicit proximum suum.* Dict. Rabbin. Vid. Hor. Heb. in Luc. c. 10. v. 29.

peaceableneſs towards our *Neighbours*, make theſe things due from us to all *mankind*. It is not either *diſtance of Country*, nor *contrariety of intereſt*, no nor, what is moſt of all preſumed to exempt us from the obligation of theſe Duties, *diverſity of opinion* or *perſwaſion in matters of Religion*, which takes away from any man his right to all that kindneſs and advantage from us, which all theſe forementioned Laws give him. But of whatſoever *Country*, *Calling*, or *Religion* he be, he is the *Neighbour* here meant, to whom all theſe inſtances of Love, which are the particular Laws of Duty, muſt be performed.

And this our Saviour has determined once for all, in his anſwer to the *Lawyer*, Luke 10. For when he put the Queſtion to him, *Who is my Neighbour*, to whom the Law commands all theſe things to be done? *ver.* 29. *Jeſus* anſwers him by a Parable, that it is every man in the World whom he may at any time have to do with, although he be never ſo much a *Stranger* to him, nay, of a party and opinion in Religion never ſo contrary unto us. For what *Religion* was ever more *odious* unto any one, than the *Samaritan* was to the *Jews*? So great a deteſtation had they of it, that when they would give a Name of the vileſt ignominy and greateſt hatred to *Chriſt* himſelf, they told him he was a *Samaritan*, and joined with it ſuch a farther Character, as they thought would beſt ſuit with it, *his being poſſeſſed with a Devil*. *Say we not well*, anſwer'd they, *that thou art a Samaritan, and haſt a Devil?* Joh. 8. 48. But yet for all this height of enmity between the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, he tells the *Jewiſh* Lawyer, who demanded of him, *who was his Neighbour*, that *a* Jewiſh *man fell among Thieves, who wounded him, and left him half dead; and that a Samaritan coming by, had compaſſion on him, and bound up his wounds, and took care of him.* Hereby inſinuating, That any man, though ſo contrary to him in Religion as theſe two were to one another, is the Neighbour whom the Law intends; and therefore in full anſwer to his Qeſtion, he bids him, *Go, and do ſo likewiſe*, Luke 10. 30, to 38.

CHAP. IV.

Of our Duties to Men in particular Relations.

BUT besides all these Laws contained in the general Command of *Love* to our Neighbour, which require something of us, to be performed or forborn towards *all Mankind*; there are yet some more *particular* instances of it, which make some things due from us, not as we are left at large towards *all Men indifferently*, but as we stand more *peculiarly related towards some:* whether that *relation* be,

1. *Publick* and *Political*, of *Prince* and *Subjects*, *Ministers* and *People*.
2. More *Private* and *Domestick*; as is that between
   1. *Husband* and *Wife*.
   2. *Parents* and *Children*.
   3. *Brethren* and *Sisters*.
   4. *Masters* and *Servants*.

For in all these *special Relations*, *love to our Neighbour* exerts it self in *special* effects; which are all such peculiar Laws, as bind us, not towards *all men indifferently*, but *only* towards *them* whom we stand *so related to*.

To begin with the first.

1. The first *relation*, from whence result several effects, of Love, and instances of Duty towards *some particular* Men, *distinct* from what we owe to the *rest* of all Mankind; is that which is between *us*, and our *Publick* or *Political Governours* and *Rulers*. And because we are Members of *two* great Societies, *one a Society in things outward and temporal, for our happiness in this World*, which is called the *State*; and the *other* in *things sacred, spiritual and eternal, for our happiness in the next World*, which is the *Church*; and God has his *Representatives* and *Vicegerents* in them both: Therefore under this *Head*, are *two* sorts of effects of Love and instances of Duty.

1. Towards *Civil Governours*, viz. *Kings* and *Princes*.
2. Towards *Ecclesiastical*, viz. *Bishops* and *Ministers*.

1. Then

1. Then towards our *Publick Civil Governours*, our *Kings* and *Princes*, the fruits of *Love*, both in *abstaining from all evil*, and *shewing all kindness and good-will to them*; will be as follows:

1. Since they are both placed *above* us, and set *over* us, our *Love* to them will produce in us, both an *opinion of their preheminence and excellence*, as being God's Deputies and Viceroys here on Earth, which is *Honour*; and *the bearing of an awful regard and behaviour towards them*, as to such, who can of right command and punish us; which is *Reverence*.
2. A *readiness*, and resolved industry, to maintain and support them in their *Persons* and *Government*, either,
   1. By doing such things towards it, as are *in our own power*, viz.
      1. For the *maintenance of their grandeur*, in a willing payment of such contributions, as are appointed for it; which is *Paying Tribute* and *Customs*.
      2. For the *preservation* of their *Lives* or *Reigns*, by revealing to them such Plots or Practices as make against them, and by endeavouring all that in us lies, according to our *promises* and *obligations* of *allegiance*, to maintain and preserve them; which is *fidelity* or *loyalty*.
   2. For things that are *above our power*, by recommending them earnestly to Almighty God, that he would bestow them on them; which is *praying for them*.
3. A more direct owning of their Authority and Presidence over us, by carrying suitably,
   1. To the things which they *command*, in *doing* or performing them; which is *Obedience*.
   2. To the *penalties*, which upon our omission or transgression they impose, by a *quiet* suffering and resting under them; which is *Subjection*.

All these are effects of Love to Kings and Princes, and so many particular Commands of God, and Instances of Duty in this relation.

And opposite to them, are all the contrary effects and prohibitions of *hatred* and *ill-will* towards them.

For from our averseness to all good Offices, and our readiness to create offence and evil to them, which are the natural effects of our hatred of them, will flow,

1. Our having undervaluing and lessening thoughts of them in our *Minds*, by looking *only*, or *chiefly* upon their failings and defects, and esteeming them no better than common Men; which is *dishonour*. And if this be expressed in a *lightness* and *contemptuousness* of behaviour towards them, which argues us to have no *fear* or *awe* of them, but to neglect and despise them; 'tis *irreverence*. Which, when it breaks out further into *reproachful Speeches*, and a discovery or inveighing against their defects, is, as S. *Jude* calls it, *speaking evil of Dignities*, Jude 8.
2. A *seeking* through our *envy* and *ill-will* to them, to *lessen* or *destroy* their *Persons* or *Power*; or at least to withdraw all our own contributions towards the maintenance, and support of them; by denying,
   1. Such things as are in our *own Power*,
      1. Towards the sustaining of their *splendor* and *grandeur*, in refusing to bear our share of the charge towards it, in *paying Taxes* and *Tribute*,
      2. Towards the preservation of their *Lives* and *Government*, in not helping and defending them, but either plotting, and endeavouring our selves to give away their Lives and Kingdoms unto others; or consenting to, and concealing them that do so, contrary to our obligations and promises of *allegeance*; which is *traiterousness*.
   2. Such things as being *above our power*, might yet be obtained for them from God at our *request*; which is *neglecting to pray for them*.
3. A more *direct disowning*, and casting off their Power and Authority over us, by going cross,
   1. To their *Commands*, in omitting what they enjoyn, or doing against it; which is *Disobedience*.
   2. To their *inflictions* and *penalties*, by not submitting and subjecting our selves to them, but violently resisting and opposing them; which

is

is called by S. *Paul resisting of power*, or (f) *standing up against it*, Rom. 13. 2. And this, when it is made by great Numbers, (as it will be, when it is not only a secret attempt, but an open and avow'd resistance, wherein none will have the Heart to engage against them without Numbers,) and when it goes on to extremities; when Men are, as the Apostle there says, (g) set in *array* and posture of defence against it, and ready by force of Arms to contend and wage War with it; is *Rebellion*.

(f) ἀνθεστηκότες τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ.

(g) ἀντιτασσόμενοι τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ.

And all these are effects of *hatred* to Princes, and instances of Disobedience in this relation.

And then,

2. For the other sort of *publick Governours*, *viz.* those of the *Church*, as are *Bishops* and *other Ministers*, the effects of *love* in *shewing all kindness*, and in *keeping back from all evil and offence* towards them, will be as follows.

1. A good and awful *opinion* of them, and of their Office in our *Minds*; looking on them as Men that bear the *great Character* of *Ambassadours from Christ*, as S. *Paul* calls them, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. and are commissioned by God to treat with us in a matter of *incomparably* the highest concernment, *viz. our eternal Salvation*; And this is *Honour*, or *esteeming them highly in love*, though not for their *personal worth*, yet *for their works sake*, 1 Thess. 5. 13. Which *honour* is expressed,
   1. By such an *awfulness* of behaviour, and *respectful*, *loving* carriage towards them, as argues in us a just sense of the *Greatness* and *Majesty* of *Christ* whom they represent, and of the *goodness* of that *Concern* which they come about; which is *reverence*.
   2. By making such *outward provisions* for them, as may at least set them *above*, and secure them from *contempt*, although it keep them *below envy*; and that is the *honour of maintenance*, whereof S. *Paul* speaks, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. And as for those things which are not in our power to confer upon them, by recommending them to God's bounty, in *praying for him*.

2. As

2. As to our *Lives*, a careful heed and observance of those things, which, as the Ministers of *Christ*, and in *his Name*, they *teach* and *enjoyn* us; which is, *Obedience*.

These are the Fruits of Love, and instances of Duty towards our *Spiritual Rulers*, the *Bishops* and *Ministers* of Christ's Church.

And opposite to all these, are the effects of *hatred*, or doing nothing towards them that may *benefit* and *please them*, but all things that may any way *vex* and *offend* them. In particular,

1. In our *Minds*, a *low* and *disparaging opinion of them*, looking on them as persons of no worth or value, and setting at nought both them and their Office; which is *dishonour*, or *setting them at nought for their works sake*. And this is outwardly expressed,
   1. In *words*, by *vilifying* and undervaluing them, either in picking up, and proclaiming their faults and failings to reproach their *Persons*, or in talking to disparage and debase their *Office*; which is *speaking evil of Ministers*. And if this be in smart jests and opprobrious mirth, to render them and their Calling *ridiculous*, 'tis *mocking* them.
   2. In *contemtuous* and *slightful behaviour* towards them, thereby shewing that we have no regard or value for them; which is *irreverence*.
   3. In denying them all *outward maintenance*, such as should preserve them from want, and from meanness and contempt; which is *not providing for them*. And if this be instanced in taking away from them, either by *force* or *fraud*, those earthly Properties and *just Dues*, of Tythes, *&c.* which the Piety of good People has most solemnly devoted to God for their use, and which our *Country Laws* have confirmed to them; it is *stealing of consecrated things*, or *sacrilege*.

   And as for those things, which must be derived to them by *God's peculiar Bounty* and *Providence*, a neglect to seek them at God's hands on their behalf; which is *not praying for them*.

2. In our *Lives* and *Actions*, a proud neglect, or rejecting of what they impose, and acting against those things, which, in the name of *Christ*, and as his Messengers, they enjoyn us; which *is Disobedience.*

All which are the *effects* of *Hatred*, and *Breaches of Duty* against them.

And these are the several effects of *Love* and *Hatred*, and the particular *commanding* and *forbidding* Laws, which God has given us for the measure of our more special Duties to this first sort of *Neighbours*, our *publick Governours* both in *Church* and *State*. And,

2. As for the other sort of *relation*, which founds some *special Duties*, distinct from those which we owe to all Mankind in common, *viz.* that which is more *private* and *domestick*; in as much as a *Family* is compounded of several states and conditions of People, whereof some are *Parents*, some *Children*, some *Masters*, and some *Servants*, it includes in it these four,

1. That of *Husband* and *Wife*.
2. That of *Parents* and *Children*.
3. That of *Brethren* and *Sisters*.
4. That of *Masters* and *Servants*.

1. The first and principle *domestick relation*, wherein Love has some peculiar effects that bind us then particularly when we are in that condition, is the relation betwixt *Husband* and *Wife*. And here *Love*, through its forwardness to delight and benefit, and its great averseness in any thing to give offence, will have these effects:

1. Such as are *mutual* and common to them both; as are,
   1. A most *tender care* and *heightned kindness*, arising from the most *intimate union* and *nearness* that is betwixt them; which expresses it self chiefly,
      1. In the *partaking* in each others bliss and misery, or being *both equally concerned* in those things, which befal *either*; which is *communicating in each others condition.*
      2. In the *bearing with each others infirmities*, and not falling into hard thoughts and estrangedness upon them.

3. For

3. For those things which are not in their power to bestow, in seeking them mutually on each others behalf from God by *Prayer*.

2. A faithful performance of that appropriate use of each others Bed, which they promised mutually at marriage; and this is *fidelity*. Which must include, both their not admitting others into it, and not separating and shutting out each other from it, which S. *Paul* calls *rendring due Benevolence*, 1 Cor. 7. 3. to their Lives end.

2. Such as are particular, and concern them in *special*, one towards the other; either,

1. The *Husband* towards the *Wife*.

And because the relation of a *Husband* implies *power* and *dominion*, that these may be rendred as easie and grateful as may be, the effect of Love here will be such a *tempering* and *sweetning* of them, as makes them contribute as much as may be to her pleasure and contentment; which it doth by making him,

1. When it is *for her benefit, to employ all his power and authority to procure her necessaries, and due conveniences*; which is *providing for her*, or *giving honour*, i. e. * *maintenance to her*, because She *is the weaker Vessel*, as S. *Peter* says, and so unable to provide it for her self, 1 *Pet.* 3. 7; and also *to guard off all inconvenience, and injury from her*; which is *protection of her*.

* Τιμήν.

2. When 'tis *over her* as his *Subject*, to *lay them in great measure aside*, and to win her rather by *the sweetness of love*, than by the *force of authority*, which is *flexible, winning Government*. And this, as it causes him to yield to her in several things, which in strictness of power he might stand upon; is *compliance and condescension*.

2. The *Wife* towards the *Husband*.

And the relation of a Wife implying subjection and dependance, the effects of *Love*, which doth nothing that *affronts* or *injures*, but all things that may any ways *pleasure* and *delight*, will be,

1. An

1. An *opinion* of his *preheminence* and *authority* over her, which is *honour*. And this, as 'tis joyned with a *fear* of offending him, that expresses it self in *respectful carriage*; is *reverence*.
2. A *free* and *forward* dispatch of all such things, as she knows he either *likes*, or *requires*, which is *observance* and *odedience*.
3. In *undergoing restraint*, a chearful submission of her self to his pleasure; which is *subjection*.

And opposite to these effects of Love, which are so many bounden Duties; the effects of *ill-will* and *hatred*, which are so many sins in this relation, will be as follows:

1. Such as are *mutual* and common unto both; as are,
   1. An *unaffectedness* in each others condition, and an insensibleness in *one part* of those things which befall the *other*; which is *unconcernedness in each others condition*.
   2. A not *bearing each others infirmities*, but either cutting out work and exercise for them, by doing or speaking such things, as are fit to irritate; which is *provocation*: Or being ill-affected towards each other upon them; which, as it is expressed in a *privation* of all that tenderness of love and kindness, which should result from the intimate nearness of their relation, is *estrangedness*: And as proceeding higher, to *ill-will*, and expressions of an imbittered mind, as it causes for the present wrangling and debate, it is *strife* or *contention*: And as festering into an habitual displeasure, and lasting regret, it is *hatred* or *enmity*; and as breaking out in a proclamation of each others weaknesses, *evil-speaking* or *publishing each others infirmities*.
   3. As doing no good to each other themselves, so seeking none from God, which is *not praying for each other*.
   4. An avoidance of each others Bed, which *S. Paul* calls *defrauding one another*, and *Denying Due Benevolence*, 1 Cor. 7. 3, 5; and being False to the Marriage Covenant, by admitting others into it, which is *Adultery*. But if this unfaithfulness

neſs *really be not*, but through the ſuſpicious temper of one ſide is only *groundleſly preſumed*; it is *Jealouſie*.

2. Such as are *peculiar*, and concern one particularly towards the other, either,

1. The *Husband* towards the *Wife*, and here the the effects of *hatred* will be,
   1. A *neglecting* to uſe his power *for her benefit*; through an inſenſibleneſs of her wants, and regardleſneſs of what hardſhips ſhe ſtruggles with, either as to *neceſſaries* or *conveniencies*, which is *not providing for her*, or *not maintaining her*; or as to *injuries* and *affronts*, which is *not protecting her*.
   2. *Uſing* all his authority *over her* by a *harſh* and *magiſterial peremptorineſs* of *Command*, which is *imperiouſneſs*; or by an *unyielding*, *inflexibleneſs* of *will* and *pleaſure*; which is *uncompliance*, *uncondeſcenſion*.
2. The *Wife* towards the *Husband*; where it will produce a light, and low opinion of him, which is *diſhonour*; which being joyned with a contemptuous and fearleſs behaviour towards him, is *irreverence*. And this will effect,
   1. A backwardneſs and utter averſeneſs to do *unbidden* what will delight and pleaſe him, which is *non-obſervance*; or what is required and commanded by him, which is *diſobedience*.
   2. A refuſal or open reluctance, in undergoing that reſtraint which he impoſes; which is *caſting off his Yoke*, or *unſubjection*.

2. The ſecond *domeſtick* relation is that of *Parents* and *Children*; and in this, the effects of *Love*, and particulars of *Duty*, are either,

1. On the Parents ſide towards their Children, as are,
   1. From the *extraordinary nearneſs that their Children have to them*, being parts even of their own Bodies, that *moſt heightned tenderneſs* and kindneſs, which, becauſe it is found in all Animals in *nature* towards their own Off-ſpring; is called *natural affection*.
   2. From their Childrens *helpleſneſs* and *wants*, their *care over them*. Which is taken up,
      1. With

1. With respect to *this World*, and that in behalf,
   1. Of their *Bodies*, by *providing* for them all due *necessaries* and *conveniencies*, both whilst they are under them, and against the time that they go *out* from them; which is *provision* and *maintenance*.
   2. Of their *whole persons* both Body and Soul, by *training* them up in the best ways they can whereby to render them profitable in their station, and useful Members of Society; which is *good* and *honest Education*. In the management whereof, the using of their Power over them, not in a *rigorous* and *austere*, but a *tender obliging way*; is *loving Government*.
2. With respect to the *next World*, and that is by causing them to be duly instructed in *Religion*, and stamped with *vertuous Impressions*; which S. *Paul* calls *bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, Eph. 6. 4.

And as for those things, which they cannot procure for them by themselves; *begging* of them from God's bounty by *Prayer for them*.

2. On the *Childrens* side towards their *Parents*, where, besides the Duty of *natural affection* common to them with the Parents, *Love* effects,
   1. An *opinion* of their *prehéminence* and *authority over them*, which is *Honour:* And this, when it is joyned with an *awful regard* to them, and a *fear* of offending them; is *Reverence*.
   2. Whilst they are *under* them, a *ready chearfulness* in *performing* all that they *command*, which is *obedience*; and in *bearing* and *undergoing* all that they *impose*, which is *submission* or *subjection*.
   3. When either they are *under* them, or gone from them, a *readiness* upon occasion to requite all their *care* and *kindness*, in *supporting* and *relieving* them; which the Apostle calls *requiting their Parents*, 1. Tim. 5. 4.
   4. And in such things wherewith they cannot supply them of themselves, *entreating* God on their behalf; which is *praying for them*.

And

And opposite to these effects of *Love* which are so many *commanded Duties*, the effects of *hatred* in this relation, which are so many particular *forbidden* sins, are these that follow:

1. In *Parents* towards their *Children*, it will produce a *coldness of heart* and *unconcernedness* for them, which is *being void of natural affection*. Which will effect,
   1. As to their *care* for them, a neglecting to provide for their present maintenance, or future support; which is condemned by S. *Paul* under the name of *not providing for those of our own house*, 1 Tim. 5. 8.
   2. As to their *Government* and *Conduct* of them, an untoward exercise and employment of it where there is no *just* need, or a neglect of it where there is. For it will produce,
      1. As to the things that are *good* and *necessary* for the *Children*, an utter *carelessness* of *them*, when the Parents *neglect* to teach and inure them to such things as may render them *dutiful* to God, and *useful* in Society; and contrariwise accustom and bring them up in *idleness*, *vanity* or *wickedness*; which is *irreligious* or *evil education*.
      2. As to things that are *unnecessary* and *indifferent*, a *great strictness* and *severity*, whether it be in *commanding* or *imposing* things *without reason*, *necessity* or *convenience*; or *convenient* things with *imperious harshness* or *unreasonable rigour*, only out of wantonness of authority and plentitude of Power, which instead of exciting them to a *chearful Obedience*, is apt to move in them an *irksome regret*; which is *provoking them to anger*.
   3. And instead of praying for them, *not praying* at all, or using passionate curses or imprecations; which is *imprecating* or *praying against them*.
2. In *Children* towards their *Parents*, it will cause, besides the want of *natural affection*,
   1. A *low esteem*, and undervaluing opinion of them in their minds; which is *dishonour*. And this, if it be joyned with a *contemptuous disregard* and

and *fearleſs behaviour* towards them; is *irreverence*: Which is expreſſed,

1. In *diſowning* or *diſregarding* them by reaſon of their meanneſs; which is *being aſhamed of them.*
2. In *entertaining* their *weakneſſes* and infirmities not with pity and ſorrow, but with *ſport* and *delight*, turning them into a matter of mirth and laughter. This is a mixture of *hatred* and *ſcorn*, and is *mocking them.*
3. In *divulging* in words, and, inſtead of *concealing* and *excuſing*, *publiſhing* their faults and defects with reproaching of them, and inveighing againſt them upon the account thereof; which is malediction, or *curſing of them.*

2. Whilſt they are under them, a *ſpiteing* and going *croſs*,

1. To their *Commands*, by *not performing* what they require, but doing againſt it; which is *Diſobedience.*
2. To their *impoſitions*, by not ſubmitting to that *reſtraint* and *burthen* which they lay upon them; which is *contumacioufneſs*, or *caſting off ſubjection.*
3. To their *intereſt*, by imbezelling or *ſecret waſting* of their ſubſtance; *which is robbing them.*

3. When either they are *under* them, or gone *from* them, not recompencing their *care* and *kindneſs*, by their *relief* and *ſervice*, when their Parents need requires it; which is *not requiting them.*

4. And inſtead of *praying for them, not praying* at all, or haſty wiſhing ill to them; which is *imprecation.*

3. The third ſort domeſtick relation, which concludes ſome inſtances of *Love* that are not due *towards all Men indifferently*, but peculiarly *towards ſome*; is the relation of *Brethren* and *Siſters*;

And theſe being ſo *nearly allied*, and partaking of the *ſame blood*; *Love* betwixt them will exert it ſelf,

1. In a moſt *paſſionate concern* and tender affection for each other; which, becauſe we ſeem to be carried on to it by the very force and inſtinct of

our nature, without any *help of reason*, or *need of being* argued up to it, is called *natural affection.*

2. And as an effect of this, a helping each other by a *reciprocal service*, and, when occasion requires, by *communicating mutually of their substance*; which St. *Paul* calls a *providing for those of our own Family*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. And in those things which they cannot afford themselves, seeking them mutually for each other by *prayer.*

And opposite to these, which are Breaches of Duty are the effects of *Hatred*; effects of Love, which are instances of Duty, betwixt them, which will effect,

1. An *unconcernedness* for each other, or a *want of natural affection.*
2. A *not helping* of each others needs, or *not providing for them*: And *not praying* to God in each others behalf, but making ill wishes mutually; which is *imprecation.*

4. The fourth and last relation, is that of *Masters* and *Servants.* And in this, the effects of Love, and instances of Duty, are either,

1. From the *Masters* to the *Servants.* Where *Love* will produce,
   1. A *care* of their *Servants*, as of Members of their own Families; both,
      1. Of their *Bodies*, in provision and *maintenance.*
      2. Of their Souls, in *religious instruction* and *admonition.*
   2. A *Government* of them that is not *harsh* and *severe*, but *kind* and *gentle*, such as we expect and desire that God, who is our *Master*, should use over us; which therefore is called by the Apostle our *dealing justly and equally with them*, i. e. so as we would have our Master to deal with us, *Col.* 4. 1. In particular observing,
      1. In our *Commands* to them, *Mercy* as well as *Justice*; in requiring *nothing that God forbids*, which is *unlawful*; *nothing for imperiousness and commands sake*, only that we may create them work though we our selves receive no benefit, which is unprofitable; and even where we

we are *advantaged* by it; *nothing* laſtly, *which is* either *above*, or at leaſt *very hard and oppreſſive to their power and ſtrength*; which is *unproportionable*. And this is *kindneſs* and *equity in commanding*.

2. In our *threatnings* and *puniſhments*, *tenderneſs* and *pity*; in not threatning and puniſhing out of *will* and *power*, or either *more* or *oftner* than *need* requires; which the Apoſtle calls *forbearing*, or *moderating threatning*, Epheſ. 6. 9.

3. In our *rewards*, paying them punctually and juſtly what they have wrought for; which is *punctual payment of the wages of the Hireling*.

4. And beſides all the kindneſs which we can do for them *our ſelves*, whether by rewarding or promoting them, *procuring* moreover all the good which we can for them at God's hands, by *praying for them*.

2. From the *Servants* to the *Maſters*.

And the *nature of ſervice*, being a *ſetting over all our power* and abilities for the time, *to their benefit whom we are to ſerve*, in all things where we are to ſerve them; the effects of *Love* in this relation will be,

1. An *opinion*, and eſteem in the mind, of their *Maſters preheminence* and *lordſhip* over them; which is *Honour*. And this being joyned with an *awfulneſs* and fear of offending him, who has both Authority to *command*, and Power to *puniſh*; is *Reverence*.

2. In things which they know he *deſires* and *delights in*, a forward care, and ready induſtry to pleaſe him, by doing them before they are *bidden*; which is *obſervance*. And this among other things effects,

   1. As for *his*, or *his Families* defects at *home*; *concealing* or *excuſing them*.
   2. As for his reputation *abroad*, when 'tis injured, *vindicating* and *defending* it.

3. A care of their Maſter's Goods, and carying ſuitably to his pleaſure; always exerciſing,

1. In those things which their Master *intrusts* them with, a *true discharge* of that trust and care of the things committed to it; which is *Fidelity*,
2. In those things which their Master *commands* a ready *performance* and execution of them; which is *Obedience*. The *vigorous application* of themselves to the dispatch whereof, is *diligence*. Which they are to shew, not only from the terrour of their Master, so long as his eye is over them, which the Apostle calls *eye-service*; but from the ready *willingness* of their *own Minds*; which will make them do it whether he be with them, or absent from them; which in the same place is called *obeying with good will* and *from the Heart*, Ephes. 6. 6, 7.
3. In those things which he *imposes* and *inflicts*, whether they be *just*, or even *unjust*, if light and *tolerable*, a *quiet* and *uncontending submission*; which is *patience* and subjection.
4. And in those things wherein they cannot advantage him themselves, commending him to Almighty God, by *Prayer for him.*

And opposite to these, are all the effects of *Hatred*, which will be instanced in these Particulars, that are all so many breaches of Duty.

1. From the *Masters* towards their *Servants*, it will produce,
   1. A *carelessness* of what becomes of their *Servants*, whether as to,
      1. Their *Bodies*, in not duly *maintaining* or *providing for them.*
      2. Their *Souls*, in *not catechizing* or *instructing of them.*
   2. A Government of them which is *cruel* and *rigorous*: And this being a dealing *otherwise* with them, than we are willing to be dealt with our selves; is *unequal Government.* Which is expressed,
      1. In the *injustice* and *severity* of our Commands, when we enjoyn *what God forbids*, which is *unlawful*; or *what tends not to benefit our selves*; *but*

but only to vex and trouble them, which is *unprofitable*; or what is either *above their ſtrength, or exceeding hard for it*; which is *unproprotionable*: And this is *unjuſtneſs*, and *wantonneſs*, and *rigour in commanding*: Which, if it be acted in a *contemptuous haughtineſs*, and *peremtory way*; is *Imperiouſneſs*.

2. In the *injuſtice* and *hardſhip* of our *threatnings* and *puniſhments*, when we uſe them *without occaſion, or more* than needs when there is *occaſion for them*; which is *immoderate threatning* or *puniſhing*. And this, as it vents it ſelf in *bitter words*, and vehemence of vilifying expreſſions, a fault that is incident to *proud, haſty* Folk, and *lordly Maſters*, is *railing at them*.

3. In the diſhoneſty and dilatorineſs of our *Rewards*, when we either *pay not at all* that which was covenanted for their ſervice, or cut it *ſhort*, or *delay it long* when their neceſſity calls for it inſtantly; which is *defrauding* or *keeping back the wages of the Hireling*.

3. And beſides all the kindneſſes which we deny them our ſelves, neglecting to ſeek for any thing for them at God's hand, by *not praying for them*, or curſing and imprecating them, which is *praying againſt them*.

2. From the *Servants* towards their *Maſters*, where the effects of hatred are,

1. A *diſeſteem* and contemptuous opinion of their *Maſters*, as Perſons of no *worth* or *preheminence* above themſelves, which is *diſhonour*. And this when it is evidenced in a *careleſs* and diſreſpectful behavour towards them, which argues them to ſtand in no *fear* or *awe* of them, is *Irreverence*.

2. An induſtrious neglect of ſuch things, as they know are *pleaſing* and *acceptable* to him; and venturing upon others, which will *diſguſt* and *offend* him; which is *non-obſervance*: Two particular expreſſions whereof are,

1. As to *his*, or *his Families* defects at *home*; a *publiſhing* and aggravation of them.

2. As to his *reputation abroad*, a suffering it to lie under imputations that are undeceived; which is *not vindicating him.*

3. An endamagement of their Master's Goods, Concerns, and Authority, by shewing,

1. In what their Master *intrusts* them with, *falseness* or non-performance; which is *unfaithfulness.*

And if it be instanced in *making away* such *Goods* or *Money*, as were committed to them,

1. To their own *luxury* and *pleasure*, by such ways as our Saviour sets down, of *eating, drinking and keeping ill company*, Mat. 24. 49. it is *wastfulness of their Master's Goods.*
2. To their own *private profit*, and secret enrichment; it is *purloining.*

2. In what their Masters *command*, a *careless omission* of it, or *acting against* it; which is, *disobedience.* Whether this be expressed,

1. In *questioning*, and *disputing* the *fitness*, and convenience of what they enjoyn, instead of *doing* and *performing it*; which S. *Paul* calls *answering again*, or * *speaking against and contradicting it*, Tit. 2. 9.
2. In a *slow* and lazy application of themselves to it, when they do set about it; which is *slothfulness.*
3. In a laborious dispatch of what they are commanded, *only* whilst their *Master's eye* is *over* them, but slackning all again when he is *gone from* them; doing all things out of *dread*, but nothing out of *choice*, and *good will*; which is *eye-service.*

3. In what their Master *imposes* or *inflicts*, a *not enduring* or resting under it; which is *contumacy* or *resistance.*

4. And in such things as God is to bestow on them, as not seeking to him by *Prayer* on their behalf; but *praying against* them.

* ἀντιλέγοντες.

And thus we have seen what are the particular effects of love and hatred, both towards *all Men in general*, and also towards *all in those several relations*, wherein we stand concerned with one another in the World. And

in

in them are contained all the particular Commands and Prohibitions which make up this third Branch of Duty, *viz. Righteousness*, or our Duty towards our *Neighbour*. All that God requires of us towards other Men, is only to have a *hearty kindness* for them, and in this manner to express it. And all that he forbids, is only our *hatred* of them, with all the forementioned effects of it. So that in the above-named instances and effects of *Love*, in *Justice*, *Charity*, *Peace*, with those others in the relations now recited, is comprized the whole of this last Member of St *Paul's* Division of Duties, *viz. Righteousness*.

Thus at last we have seen what are all the *particular* instances of those three *general* Laws, *Sobriety*, *Piety* and *Righteousness*; wherein, if we add two or three more, is comprized the Body of our whole Duty.

If we add *two* or *three* more, I say; for besides the several Laws already mentioned, there are three particular Duties yet remaining, two whereof are of a more *positive* and *arbitrary* Nature, which Christ has bound all Christians to observe; and they are the Law of *Baptism*, of the *Lord's Supper*, and of *Repentance*.

Baptism is our *incorporation into the Church of Christ*; or our *entrance into the Gospel-Covenant*, or *into all the duties and priviledges of Christians*, *by means of the outward Ceremony*, *of washing or sprinkling*, *in the name of the Father*, *and of the Son*, *and of the Holy Ghost*.

The *Eucharist* or *Lord's Supper*, is our *Federal Vow*, or *repetition of that engagement which we made at Baptism*, *of performing Faith*, *Repentance and Obedience unto God*; *in expectation of remission of sins*, *eternal Happiness*, *and those other promises which by Christ's Death are procured for us upon these terms: Which engagement we solemnly make to God at our eating Bread and drinking Wine*, *in remembrance and commemoration of Christ's dying for us*.

Repentance is a *forsaking of Sin*, or *an amendment of any evil way upon a sorrowful sense*, *and just apprehension*, *of its making us offend God*, *and subjecting us to the danger*, *of Death and Damnation*.

And if to all the forementioned instances of those *three grand* Vertues, which by the Apostle, *Tit.* 2. 12, 13. are made the summ of our Christian Duty, we join these *three additional*, whereof the *two* first are *positive* Laws; we have all that whereby God will judge us at the last

Day, even all those *particular Laws*, whereto our Obedience is required as *necessary* to *Salvation*.

And thus we have seen what those particular Laws are, which the Gospel indispensibly requires us to obey. They are no other, than those very instances, which I have been all this while recounting and describing. all which I will here repeat again, and place in one view, for the greater ease of all such pious Souls as desire to direct, or try themselves by them.

A Catalogue of all the foregoing Laws.

The commanding Laws then whereby at the last Day we must all be judged, are these that follow.

The Law of *Sobriety* towards our selves, with all its Train, which are the law of *Humility*, of *Heavenly mindedness*, of *Temperance*, of *Sobriety*, of *Chastity*, of *Continence*, of *Contempt of the World* and *Contentment*, of *Courage and taking up the Cross*, of *Diligence and Watchfulness*, of *Patience*, of *Mortification* and *Self-denial*.

The Law of *Piety* towards God with all its Branches, which are the Laws of *Honour* towards him, of *Worship*, of *Faith* and *Knowledge*, of *Love*, of *Zeal*, of *Trust* and *Dependance*, of *Prayer*, of *Thankfulness*, of *Fear*, of *Submission* and *Resignedness*, or *Obedience*.

The Law of *Justice* towards Men in all its parts, which will be seen by the contrary prohibitions of *Injustice*.

The Law of *Charity* in all its instances; which are the Law of *goodness* or *kindness*, of *honour for our Brethrens Vertue*, of *pity* and *succour*, of *restraining our Christian Liberty for our weak Brother's edification*, of *friendly reproof*, of *brotherly kindness*, of *congratulation when they receive good*, of *compassion when they suffer evil*, of *alms and distribution*, of *covering and concealing their defects*, of *vindicating their injured reputation*, of *affability*, or *graciousness*, of *courtesie* and *officiousness*, of *condescension*, of *hospitality*, of *gentleness*, of *candor*, of *unity*, of *thankfulness*, of *meekness* or *lenity*, of *placableness*, of *forgiving injuries*, of *doing good to enemies*, and, when nothing more is in our power, *praying for them*, and *blessing* or *speaking what is good of them*, when we take occasion to mention them, of *long-suffering* before we proceed

proceed to punish, of *mercifulness* in exacting *punishment* or *satisfaction.*

The Law of *Peace* and *Concord* with all its Train; as are, the Law of *peaceableness*, of *condescension* and *compliance*, of *doing our own business*, of *satisfying for injuries*, of *peace-making.*

The Law of *love* to *Kings* and *Princes* in all its Particulars; which are, the Law of *Honour*, of *Reverence*, of *paying Tribute and Customs*, of *Fidelity*, of *Praying for them*, of *Obedience*, of *Subjection.*

The Law of *Love* to our *Bishops* and *Ministers* with all its expressions; which are the Law of *Honour*, or *having them highly in esteem for their works sake*, of *Reverence*, of *Maintenance*, of *praying for them*, of *Obedience.*

The Law of *Love* in the particular relation of *Husband* and *Wife* with all its Branches; which are on *both* sides, the Law of *mutual concern*, and *communicating in each others bliss or misery*, of *bearing each others infirmities*, of *prayer*, of *fidelity*, of *rendring due benevolence*: On the *Husband* towards his *Wife*, the Law of *providing for her*, of *protecting her*, of *flexible and winning Government*, of *compliance* and *condescension*: On the *Wives* towards her *Husband*, the Law of *Honour*, of *Reverence*, of *Observance* and *Obedience*, of *Subjection.*

The Law of *Love* in the particular relation of *Parents* and *Children*, with its several effects; which are, from the *Parents* towards their *Children*, The Law of *natural affection*, of *maintenance and provision, of honest education*, of *loving government*, of *bringing them up in the institution and fear of God*, of *praying for them*: From the Children, towards their Parents, besides the Duty of *natural affection* common to both, the Law of *Honour*, of *Reverence*, of *Obedience*, of *Subjection*, of *requiting* upon occasion *their care and kindness*, of *Prayer for them.*

The Law of *Love* in the particular relation of *Brethren* and *Sisters*, with all its instances; which are the Law of *natural affection*, of *providing for our Brethren*, of *praying for them.*

The Law of *Love* in the particular relation of *Master* and *Servant*, with its several expressions; which are, on the *Master's* side, the Law of *maintenance*, of *religious instruction*, of a *just and equal Government of them*,

them, of *kindness and equity in commanding*, of *forbearance* and *moderation in threatning*, of *punctual payment of the wages of the Hireling*, of *praying for them*: On the *Servants*, the Law of *Honour*, of *Reverence*, of *Observance*, of *concealing and excusing their Master's defects*, of *vindicating their injured Reputation*, of *Fidelity*, of *Obedience*, of *Diligence*, of *willing* and *hearty service*, of *patient submission* and *subjection*, of *praying for them*.

To all which we may add the two *arbitrary institutions* and *positive Laws* of the *Gospel*, *Baptism*, and the *Eucharist* or *Lord's Supper*; and when we transgress in any of the instances forementioned, that great and only remedy of Christ's Relation, the Law of *Repentance*.

This, so far as I can call to mind at present, is a just enumeration of those particular Injunctions and Commands of God, whereto our Obedience is indispensibly required, and whereby at the last Day we must all be judged either to live or die eternally.

But supposing that some particular instances of Love and Duty are omitted in this Catalogue, yet need this be prejudicial to no Man's Happiness, since that defect will be otherwise supplied. For as for such omitted instances, where there is an occasion for them, and an opportunity offered to *exercise* them, Men's *own reason* and *passion* will represent and suggest them, for a *Rule of Obedience*; and when they *wilfully transgress* them, their own Conscience must needs check and reprove them, which will be sufficient to them for a *rule of trial*. For all the Laws of this *second*, which is the *Gospel-Covenant*, are so agreeably suited to our natural reason and conscience, that every Man's own mind may be a sufficient Monitor. What our own understanding tells us is fit, and becoming us that we should do; that has God bound upon us by his Laws, and made it our Duty to do. His Precepts are the very same, with the best results, and purest dictates of our own reason; so that every pious and honest Conscience, cannot but of it self approve all that God has enjoyned it. Which God himself has clearly intimated, when he says of all the Laws of the *second* which is the *Gospel-Covenant*, that he *will put* the *Laws* contained in it *into their minds*, *and write them in their Hearts*; so that, in regard they have them so legible within themselves, *they shall not* need to be still enquiring

quiring of others, and to *teach every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, saying Know the Lord*; and that in this, or that particular you must serve him; *for all shall know him* and his Laws, without any other Monitor than their own Conscience *from the least to the greatest*, Heb. 8. 10, 11.

Besides as for all the Laws of *Piety* towards God, and of *Righteousness* towards Men, which make up by far the greatest part of our Duty; they are only so many several effects, and various expressions of our *Love* to them. So that he who acts nothing against love, breaks none of all these Laws, but keeps them every one. Whereof Christ himself (who has given these Laws, and who is to judge of our Obedience to them) and his Apostle *Paul* have given us sufficient assurance, when they both affirm of *Love*, that, as to these two general parts of Duty, it is *the fulfilling of the Law*. And therefore any Man who knows what *Love* is, may quickly understand what is *Law*; and when he is about to venture upon any action, it is but asking his own Soul whether it be *against Love*, and he has his answer whether or no it be *against Duty*.

And since, whensoever we have occasion for it; we shall be admonished of our Duty both these ways, both from our *reason*, and our *passion*; though this Catalogue prove defective in some instances, and omit them, that defect can be no danger, seeing it will be otherwise supplied. We may by its help know those Duties, which it mentions; and by the help of the other two those particulars wherein it fails us. So that we shall still be sufficiently *directed in our Duty*, and shewed what we should *do*; and when we Sin against it wilfully, our own Conscience is privy to it, which will enable us to examine also whether indeed we have *done* it, or no.

This then may suffice for a particular enumeration of all the *Commanding* Laws of God, whereto our Obedience is required, as an indispensible condition of our Life and Happiness.

And as for all the *forbidding* Laws, which contain those things which under the highest pains of Death and Misery we are indispensibly required to abstain from, they are these that follow:

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The Law against unsoberness towards our selves, with all its particulars; which are, the Law against *pride*, against *arrogance* or *ostentation*, against *vain-glory*, against *ambition*, against *haughtiness*, against *insolence*, against *imperiousness*, against *dogmaticalness*, against *envious backbiting*, against *emulation*, against *worldliness*, against *intemperance*, against *gluttony*, against *voluptuousness*, against *drunkenness*, against *revelling*, against *incontinence*, against *lasciviousness*, or *wantonness*, against *filthiness*, against *obscene jestings*, against *impurity* or *uncleanness*, against *sodomy*, against *effeminateness*, against *adultery*, against *fornication*, against *whoredom*, against *incest*, against *rape*, against *covetousness*, against *grudging*, and *repining*, against *refusing* or *being scandalized at the Cross*, against *idleness* and *carelessness*, against *fearfulness* and *softness*, against *self-love*, against *carnality*, against *sensuality*.

The Law against *impiety* towards God, with all its Retinue; which are, the Law against *dishonour* of him, against *atheism*, against *denying Providence*, against *blasphemy*, against *superstition*, against *idolatry*, against *witchcraft* and *sorcery*, against *foolishness*, against *headiness*, against *unbelief*, against *hating God*, against *want of zeal for him*, against *distrust of him*, against *not praying to him*, against *unthankfulness for his Mercies at his disposals*, against *fearfulness of his Power and Justice*, against *contumacy* or *repining at his Laws*, against *disobedience*, against *common swearing*, against *perjury* or *forswearing*, against *prophaneness*.

The Law against *injustice* towards Men, in all its instances; which are, the Law against *murder*, against *slander* or *calumny*, against *lying*, against *unfaithfulness* or *perfidiousness*, against *adultery*, against *covetousness*, against *stealing* or *robbing*, against *bearing false witness*, against *oppression*, against *extortion* and *depressing in bargaining*, against *circumvention* and *deceit*, against *craftiness*.

The Law against *uncharitableness* with all its Train; which are, the Law against *maliciousness* or *hatefulness*, against *wickedness*, against *despising* and *hating them that are good*, against *giving scandal to weak Brethren*, against *envy* or *an evil eye*, against *rejoycing in evil*, against *uncharitableness in alms*, against *not vindicating an innocent Man's reputation*, against *evil speaking*, against *censoriousness*,

neſs, againſt *back-biting*, againſt *wiſpering*, againſt *railing* or *reviling*, againſt *upbraiding others with our favours*, againſt *reproaching them with their own failings*, againſt *mocking*, againſt *difficulty of acceſs*, againſt *contumely* or *affront*, againſt *uncourteouſneſs*, againſt *ſtiffneſs* or *uncondeſcenſion*, againſt *unhoſpitableneſs*, againſt *ſurlineſs*, againſt *malignity in paſſing conſtructions*, againſt *turbulence* and *unquietneſs*, againſt *unthankfulneſs*, againſt *anger* and *paſſionateneſs*, againſt *debate* and *variance*, againſt *bitterneſs*, a gainſt *clamour* and *brawling*, againſt *hatred* and *malice*, a gainſt *implacableneſs after injuries*, againſt *revenge*, againſt *curſing* and *reproaching enemies* and *imprecation of them*, againſt *haſtineſs to puniſh*, againſt *rigour*.

The Law againſt *enmity* and *diſcord*, with all its Dependants; which are, the Law againſt *unpeaceableneſs*, againſt *emulation or provoking one another*, againſt *pragmaticalneſs or being Buſie-bodies*, againſt *tale-bearing*, againſt *whiſpering*, againſt *not ſatisfying for injuries*, againſt *ſtrife* or *contention*, againſt *diviſion* and *faction* in the ſtate, againſt *hereſie*, and againſt *ſchiſm* in the Church, againſt *tumult*.

The Law againſt *hatred* in the particular relation of *Subjects* towards their *Princes*, with the ſeveral effects of it; which are, the Law againſt *diſhonour*, againſt *irreverence*, againſt *ſpeaking evil of Dignities*, againſt *refuſing Tribute* and *Taxes*, againſt *traiterouſneſs*, againſt *neglecting to pray for Kings*, againſt *diſobedience*, againſt *reſiſting lawful Powers* and *Authority*, againſt *rebellion*.

The Law againſt hatred to our Eccleſiaſtical Governours, *Biſhops* and *Miniſters*, with all the particulars implied in it; which are the Law againſt *diſhonour of our Biſhops* and *Miniſters*, eſpecially againſt *ſetting them at nought for their works ſake*, againſt *irreverence to them*, againſt *ſpeaking evil of them*, againſt *mocking them*, againſt *not providing for them*, againſt *ſacrilege or ſtealing from them*, againſt *not praying for them*, againſt *diſobedience*.

The Law againſt hatred in the relation of *Husband* and *Wife*, with all its Particulars; which are, on *both* ſides, the Law againſt *unconcernedneſs in each others condition*, againſt *not bearing each others infirmities*, againſt *provoking one another*, againſt *eſtrangedneſs*, againſt *ſtrife* or *contention*, againſt *hatred* and *enmity*, againſt *publiſhing each others infirmities*, againſt *not praying for each other*, againſt

against *defrauding one another*, or *denying due Benevolence*, against *adultery*, against *jealousie*: On the *Husbands* towards the *Wife*, the Law against *not maintaining her*, against *not protecting her*, against *imperiousness*, against *uncompliance*, or *uncondescension*: On the *Wife's* towards her *Husband*, the Law against *dishonour*, against *irreverence*, against *unobservance*, against *disobedience*, against *casting off his yoke*, or *unsubjection*.

The Law against *hatred* in the particular relation of *Parents* and *Children*, with all its instances; which are on both sides, the Law against *want of natural affection*, against *not praying for each other*, and *imprecation*: On the Parents side, the Law against *not providing for those of their own house*, against *irreligious and evil education*, against *harsh Government*, or *provoking their Children to anger*. On the Childrens, the Law against *dishonour*, against *irreverence*, against *being ashamed of their Parents*, against *mocking them*, against *cursing or reproach*, and *speaking evil of them*, against *disobedience*, against *contumaciousness*, against *robbing them*.

The Law against *hatred* in the particular relation of *Brethren* and *Sisters*, with its effects; which are, the Law against *want of natural affection*, against *not providing for our Brethren*, against *not praying for them*, against *imprecation* or *praying against them*.

The Law against *hatred* in the particular relation of Master and Servant, with all its expressions; which are on the *Master's* side, the Law against *not providing maintenance for his Servants*, against *not catechizing or instructing him*, against *unequal Government*, against *unjustness*, *wantonness*, and *rigour in commanding*, against *imperiousness*, against *immoderate threatning*, against *railing at him*, against *defrauding* or *keeping back the wages of the Hireling*, against *not praying for them*, against *imprecation*: And on the *Servants*, the Law against *dishonour of his Master*, against *irreverence*, against *non-observance*, against *publishing* or *aggravating his Master's faults*, against *not vindicating his injured reputation*, against *unfaithfulness*, against *wasting his Goods*, against *purloining*, against *disobedience*, against *answering again*, against *loathfulness*, against *eye-service*, against *contumacy* and *resistance*, against *not praying for them*, against *imprecation* or *praying against him*.

To

To all which we must add the two positive and arbitrary prohibitions of the Gospel, the Law against *neglecting Baptism*, and *the Lord's Supper*. And when we wilfully transgress any one, or more of the Commands foregoing, a perseverance in it without amending it; which is *impenitence*.

And these are those particular prohibitions, whereto our Obedience is indispensibly required by the Gospel, and whereby at the last Day we must all be judged.

And for the performance of all these *Commands*, and keeping back from all these *Prohibitions* when it is become any Man's habitual course and practice; it is oftimes expressed by the general word *holiness*, as the contrary is by *unholiness*.

CHAP. V.

Of the Sanction of the foregoing Laws.

NOW it is upon our Obedience to all those Laws, which are mentioned in the foregoing Chapters, that all our well-grounded hope of Pardon, and happy Sentence at the last Day, depends. They are that Rule, which God has fixt for the proceedings at that Judgment, whereby all of us will be doomed to live or die eternally. There is not any one of them left naked and unguarded, for Men to transgress at pleasure, and yet to go unpunished: But the performance of every one is made necessary unto Life, and the unrepented Transgression of it threatned with eternal Damnation.

And that it is so, is plain from this, because almost the whole Body of them, *viz.* all those which are implyed in *Piety towards God*, and in *Justice*, *Charity* and *Peaceableness towards Men*, are nothing else but instances, and effects of *Love*, which is plainly necessary, and that in the *greatest latitude*. For the words of the command are as comprehensive, as can be. That thou mayest *inherit eternal Life*, *thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Strength, and with*

with all thy Mind; which plainly take in our whole affection towards God, and every part and expression of it: *And* thou shalt love *thy Neighbour as thy self*, which again implies all instances of love towards other Men, seeing not any one of them is wanting towards our own selves: *This do, and thou shalt live*, Luke 10. 25, 27, 28. So that in shewing of them all, that they are *natural effects* of an *universal love*, I have shewn withal that they are *necessary means* of *Life*, and *conditions* of *Salvation*.

This is a plain mark, whereby it is obvious and easie for us all to understand, what Laws are necessary terms of Life. For every Man's Heart can inform him, what are the *natural effects of Love*, they being such things as the meanest reason may discern, nay such as every Man's affection will suggest to him. And because they are so, the Apostles themselves, when they set down Catalogues of indispensible Laws, never descend to reckon up all particulars; but having plainly declared the absolute necessity of an *ample* and *universal love* in the *general*, they content themselves with naming some few instances of it, and leave the rest, which are like unto them, to be suggested to us by our own Minds. And the same course they take in recounting those Sins, which are opposite to them, and which, without Repentance, will certainly destroy us. Thus, for instance, in St. *Paul's* Catalogue of damning Sins, *Gal.* 5. he doth not trouble himself to name all particulars, but having mentioned *several* of them, he concludes with this *general* intimation of the rest---*and such like*, v. 28.

But because our belief of the necessity of our Obedience in all the preceding particulars is of so great moment, and it is so infinitely our concern to be fixt and settled in it; I will here set down such express declarations of it in every one of them, as are to be met with in the Scriptures.

And to begin with the several *Classes* of them in the same order, wherein they are laid down; for *sobriety*; and all the particular Laws comprehended under it, we have their sanction set down, and the necessity of our Obedience unto them to our life and pardon, expressed in the following Scriptures.

For the Law of *Humility* and *Lowliness* of Mind, take these:

Put

Put on as neceſſary qualifications of *the elect of God, holy and belov'd, humbleneſs of mind,* Col. 3. 12. It is this Poverty and Lowlineſs of Spirit, which muſt prepare us for eternal happineſs. *Bleſſed are the poor in Spirit,* Mat. 5. 3. For as our Saviour ſays, 'tis by *learning of him who is meek and low'ly, that we ſhall find reſt to our Souls,* both here and hereafter, *Matt.* 11. 29. *Humility.*

And for all the reſt, their Sanction is expreſſed in theſe enſuing places.

Labour not for the meat that periſheth, but for that which endureth to everlaſting life, Joh. 6. 27. This is a neceſſary evidence, of our being riſen with Chriſt now at preſent; *if ye be riſen with Chriſt, ſeek thoſe things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth at the right Hand of God. Set your Affections on things above, and not on things on the Earth,* Col. 3. 1, 2. And a neceſſary condition to our being bleſſed with him for ever hereafter, the bleſſedneſs which our Saviour pronounces, being to thoſe *which hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs.* Mat. 5. 6. *Heavenly-mindedneſs.*

Add to temperance patience, for he that lacketh theſe is blind, and ſhall not be looked on as a new man, ſeeing he *has forgot that* he was purged from his old ſins, 2 *Pet.* 1. 6, 9. *The fruit of the Spirit,* ſaith S. *Paul, is temperance,* or * *continence,* and it is *againſt* this, among others, *that there is no law* to condemn it, *Gal.* 5. 23. And to the *Hebrews,* he ſays, that *they have need of patience to inherit the promiſes* of life and happineſs, *Heb.* 10. 36. And therefore they muſt not caſt away, but hold faſt their *confidence,* or courageous and † open owning even of a ſuffering Religion, *which hath great recompence of reward;* v. 35. It being to them only, *who by patient continuance in well doing, ſeek for glory and immortality, that God will give eternal life,* Rom. 2. 7. *Temperance. Patience. Continence.* * ἐγκράτεια. † παῤῥησία.

Dearly beloved, I beſeech you as ſtrangers and pilgrims, abſtain from fleſhly luſts, which war againſt the Soul, to vanquiſh and deſtroy it, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. This Abſtinence is one chief thing, which we are called to at our Call to Chriſtianity. *God hath not called us to uncleanneſs,* ſaith S. *Paul, but unto holineſs,* or * *purity* and *cleanneſs. For this is the will of God,* which you are firſt to perform before you expect his Reward, your *purity* or *ſanctification,* and particularly in one inſtance, wherein you are ſo generally defective, *that you abſtain from* *Chaſtity.* * ἐν ἁγιασμῷ.

fornication, and every one of you possess his Vessel or Body *in purity* or *sanctification and honour.* And this *Commandment you know we gave you by the Lord Jesus*'s order, so that *whosoever among you despiseth it, despiseth not man, but God,* 1 Thess. 4. 2, 3, 4, 7, 8. For *the wisdom which cometh from above,* and which must carry us thither, *is in the first place* pure or * chast *James* 3. 17.

* ἁγνὴ. *Contempt of the World.*

Love not the world, nor the things of the world; for if any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him, 1 Joh. 2. 15. *For the* esteem and *friendship of the world,* is in very deed downright *enmity with God. Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God,* James 4. 4. *Godliness* if it be join'd *with contentment is great gain,* saith S. *Paul,* 1 Tim. 6. 6. And our *being content with such things as we have,* is reckoned a part of that *Grace whereby we must serve God acceptably,* and be secured from his wrath, *who,* where he is angred, *is a consuming fire,* Heb. 12. 28. to the fifth Verse of the thirteenth Chapter.

Content-ment.

Self-denial. Taking up the Cross. Mortification.

Christ said unto them all, *If any man will come after me,* and be accounted one of my Disciples, *let him deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me,* Luke 9. 23. *If ye through the Spirit, do mortifie the deeds of the Body,* saith S. *Paul, ye shall live,* Rom. 8. 13. Yea, its affections and desires, as well as its sinful actions, are to be mortified and brought under. *For they that are Christ's,* whom he will *own* for his at the last Day, and reward accordingly, *have crucified the flesh, with the affections and* † *lusts* or *desires* thereof, *Gal.* 5. 24.

†Rom. 13. 14.

Sobriety. Watchfulness. Diligence.

They who would not be accounted in God's judgment, as *Children of the night and of darkness,* S. *Paul* says plainly, must *watch and be sober,* 1 Thess. 5. 5, 6. For watching is necessary unto bliss; *Blessed is that Servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find watching,* Luke 12. 37. And *give diligence, to make your calling and election sure,* saith S. *Peter, for* this is one of those things, which *if you do you shall never fall,* either from your duty, or your reward, 2. *Pet.* 1. 10.

Thus are all the particular Laws recited in the first Class, *Sobriety,* expressly bound upon us, by all our hopes of Heaven; and our obedience to them is made plainly necessary to our life and pardon, when we come to be judged according to them.

And

And the Sanction is the same, for all the Particulars of the *second Class*, our *piety towards God*, as will appear by the following Scriptures. *Piety.*

Them that honour me, saith God, *I will honour*, or make honourable; *but they who despise me, shall*, on the other hand, *be as lightly set by*, 1 Sam. 2. 30. And *if any man be a worshipper of God, him*, said the man who had received his sight most truly, *he heareth*, Joh. 9. 31. *Honour.* *Worship.*

He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned, Mark 16. 16. *For this is the will of him that sent me*, saith our Saviour, *that whosoever believeth on me, may have everlasting Life*, Joh. 6. 40. And what we hear of *Faith*, is also said of *Knowledge*: For *this is life eternal*, saith Christ, *to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent*, John 17. 3. *Faith.* *Knowledge.*

The good things, which neither eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, i. e. the joys of Heaven, *are laid up for those who love God*, 1 Cor. 2. 9. And *if any Man love God, the same is known*, or accepted, *by him*, 1 Cor. 8. 3. *Love.*

It is *he who believes* Christ's promises, or hopes *on him, that shall never be ashamed*, Rom. 10. 11. And *we trust in God*, saith S. *Paul, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe* or trust in him, 1 *Tim.* 4. 10. And a cheerful *dependence* upon God's Providence, for our *food* and *maintenance, &c.* and not being *sollicitous* about them, is one of the particulars of Christ's Law, *Matt.* 6. 25. the Sanction whereof is expressed in the fifth Chapter in these words, *He who breaks the least of these Commandments, shall be least in the Kingdom of Heaven, i. e.* according to the Hebrew manner of speaking, *he shall be none at all*, v. 19. *Hope.* *Trust.* *Dependence.*

Pray without ceasing, 1 Thess. 5. 17. It is this that must bring all blessings down upon us. For the Promise is, *Ask and you shall have*, Matt. 7. 7. But no Petition being put up, no Grant can in reason be expected; *You have not*, saith S. *James, because ye ask not*, James 4. 2. *Prayer.*

God's Mercy is on all that fear him, Luke 1. 50. *I will warn you*, saith our Saviour, *whom you shall fear; fear God, who after he hath killed, hath* yet further *power to cast you into Hell*, if you are fearless and contemptuous, *I say unto you, Fear him*, Luke 12. 5. *Fear.*

Thankfulness. *In every thing give thanks, for this is the will of God concerning you,* 1 Thess. 5. 18. It is one part of our *walking as Children of the light, to give thanks always, and in all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Ephes. 5. 8, 20. And the Apostle's Exhortation is, *Offer to God the sacrifice of praise continually, giving thanks to his name*; and that *because we have no abiding City, but seek one to come,* Heb. 13. 1, 15.

Zeal. The Church of *Laodicea*, to the end that *she may be rich and cloathed,* is advised to be *zealous and to repent,* Rev. 3. 18, 19. And one effect of *a godly sorrow* and a *saving repentance,* S. *Paul* saith, is *zeal* for God and goodness, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11.

Obedience. * Gal. 5. 6. and 6. 13. *In Christ Jesus* or the Christian Religion, *neither Circumcision** *availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision: but keeping of the Commandments of God,* 1 Cor. 7. 19. For it is this only, that gives right to life and happiness; *Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life,* Rev. 22. 14.

Subjection. or Resignedness. *Our Fathers after the flesh corrected us, and we gave them reverence, and shall we not much rather be in subjection to the father of spirits, and live?* Heb. 12. 9.

And thus are all the particulars of this second Class of Duties, *Piety,* bound upon us with the same sanction as the former, and our Obedience to them all, is made necessary to our being pardoned at the last Day, and eternally rewarded by them.

Righteousness. Justice. And the same is further true, of the Duties of the third Class, *righteousness towards our neighbour.*

For as for the necessity of *Justice,* S. *Paul* is clear, *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another,* Rom. 13. 8. For *if you wrong and defraud one another,* saith the same Apostle, *know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God,* 1 Cor. 6. 8, 9.

Charity, Goodness or Kindness, Brotherly-kindness Honour of our Brethren for their Vertues, &c. And as for all the particular Laws of *Charity,* their necessity will appear from what follows.

Be kindly affectioned one to another, as if you were of the same Blood and * near Kindred, *with brotherly love, in honour,* † *preferring one another* for your Vertues before your selves, and much more *vindicating* each other from the unjust aspersions of others. *Distributing* or* Communicating *to the necessity of saints; given to,* or earnestly

* φιλόστοργοι. † Phil. 2. 3. * κοινωνοῦντες.

neſtly † purſuing *hoſpitality: bleſs* * or ſpeak well of *them which perſecute you; bleſs and curſe not. Rejoyce with them that* do *rejoyce*, in *congratulation*; and *weep with them that weep*, † in *compaſſion. Be of the ſame mind one towards another; mind not* ſtate and *high things, but* be affable and *condeſcend*, by * going even out of your way to bear them company *to men of low eſtate. Recompence to no man evil for evil; but if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirſt, give him drink*, Rom. 12. 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20. All which Precepts, with ſeveral others delivered in that Chapter, he gave in command, as he tells them, *through the Grace* or Authority of the *Apoſtleſhip*, which is here and * elſewhere called Grace, *given unto him*, v. 3. and that is a plain Proof of their indiſpenſible neceſſity. For he *that deſpiſeth you* Apoſtles, ſays our Saviour, *deſpiſeth me*, Luke 10. 16. And if the *tranſgreſſion and diſobedience of the law* of *Moſes ſpoken* to him only *by Angels* in the mount, *received a juſt recompence of reward*, ſuch Offenders dying † without mercy; *how ſhall we eſcape* the ſame Death or greater, *if we neglect*, and much more if we deſpiſe *ſo great* a means of *ſalvation*, as Chriſt's Goſpel and his Laws are, *which was at firſt ſpoken to us by the Lord* Jeſus himſelf, who is far above all Angels, *and was* afterwards *confirmed to us by* his Apoſtles, or *them that heard him?* Heb. 2. 2, 3.

† διώκοντες. * εὐλογεῖτε. † Gal. 6. 2. and 1 Pet. 3. 8, 11, 12. * συναπαγόμενοι.

Hoſpitality. Speaking well of Enemies. Congratulation. Compaſſion. Unity. Affability. Condeſcenſion. Doing good to Enemies.

*Rom. 1. 5. & 15. 15. Eph. 3. 8.

† Heb. 10. 28.

The Wiſdom from above, and which muſt bring us thither, *is gentle, eaſie to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits*, James 3. 17. And S. *Paul* bids the Coloſſians, to *put on as the elect of God, holy and beloved*, theſe Vertues; *viz. bowels of* * *mercies, kindneſs* or † *courteſie, meekneſs, long-ſuffering* or *forbearing one another*, and * *forgiving one another; if any man hath a quarrel againſt any, even as Chriſt forgave you, ſo do ye*, Coloſſ. 3. 12, 13, 15. *The fruits of the ſpirit*, ſaith the ſame Apoſtle, *are love, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, goodneſs, meekneſs; againſt ſuch there is no* condemning force of any *Law*, Gal. 5. 22, 23.

* James 2. 13. † χρηστότητα. * Mat. 6. 14, 15.

Gentleneſs. Placableneſs. Mercifulneſs. Courteſie. Meekneſs. Long-ſuffering. Forgiving injuries.

The deſcription, which S. *Paul* gives of Charity, is this, *Charity ſuffers long* in great meekneſs before it be provoked, *and is kind* or † courteous towards all men;

† 1 Pet. 3. 8, 12.

is not puffed up with supercilious and haughty behaviour, (for men do not assume state over those Persons whom they love) but is lowly and affable; *doth not behave it self unseemly* * or contumeliously, but with much respect and civility; *seeks not her own* Praise and Glory, at other mens cost or discredit; *is not easily provoked*, or not provoked to the (*x*) height, but mixes mercifulness with anger, opposite to rigor; *rejoyces* or (*y*) congratulates *the truth*, or sincerity and integrity of men; and as for their infirmities, *it bears* or (*z*) covers and conceals *all things* that are defective; *believes all things* to their advantage, in putting the most candid and favourable sense upon any thing which they do or say; and where there is no excuse for the present, *it hopeth all things* good for the future; and for injuries offered to it self, it is not hasty and vindictive, but patiently *endureth all things*, 1 Cor. 13, 4, 5, 6, 7. And for the necessity of that Charity, which includes all these, S. *Paul* is express in the same Chapter, when he tells us, that *although he have all faith, and all knowledge, and bestow all his goods to feed the poor*, yea, *and give his body to be burned* in Martyrdom, yet, if still he *have not Charity* in all these other effects, and in that latitude wherein he is here described, *it profiteth him nothing*, ver. 2. 3.

I say unto you, love your enemies, and bless, or (*a*) speak all the good you can of *them that curse*, or reproach *you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you, and persecute you, that* by this means *you may be the children of your father which is in Heaven*, Matth. 5. 44, 45. Which Laws are of the number of those, which are contained in Christ's Sermon on the Mount, at the beginning whereof he declared, that *whosoever should break the least of these Commandments* which he was then about to deliver, *and should teach men* to do *so, he should be least*, or none at all, *in the Kingdom of Heaven*, ver. 19.

Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in thy heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer sin to rest *upon him: I am the Lord*, who will surely punish thee, if thou neglect this, *Lev.* 19. 17, 18. But when *any man*, by such charitable admonition, *doth convert a Sinner from the error of his way, let him* for his encouragement *know this*, says S. *James*, *that he shall save the soul*

Affability.
* ἐκ ἀσχημονεῖ.
(x) ὑ παροξύνεται. *Mercifulness.*
(y) Συνχαίρει.
(z) στέγει *Covering mens defects.*
Candor.
Patience.
(a) εὐλογεῖτε *Speaking good of enemies.*
Doing good to them.
Praying for them.
Friendly reproof.

of

of him who is reproved *from death, and* besides that, *shall hide* also *a multitude of* his own *sins,* James 5. 19, 20. And as for the method of performing this, what course we are to take, and how far we are to proceed in it, our Saviour may seem to have set that down, according to what had obtained in the (*b*) *Jewish* custom, *Matth.* 18. *If thy Brother shall trespass against thee,* take this course to reclaim him: *Go* first and *tell him* of *his fault,* privately, *between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee,* and amend upon thy admonition, thy work is done, and without any more ado, *thou hast gained thy Brother. But if he* be not to be won thus easily, and *will not hear thee* admonishing him thus privately by thy self alone; *then* give not over, but go one step further; *take with thee one or two more* to join with thee in thy admonition, that by the authority of their concurrence, he may be the more prevailed upon, and that the reproof now appearing, not in thy mouth alone, but also *in the mouths of* thy *two or three Witnesses, every word may* have the more effect, and *be* the firmlier *established. And if he* shall be incorrigible still, and *neglect to hear* both thee and them too; yet give him not over for a lost man, but try one means more, which is the last that I look for, *tell it unto the Church,* and reprove him before all them. *But if he* prove obstinate against this last means, and *neglect to hear them*; then thou hast discharged thy self, and needest to look no further after him till he shews a better mind, but mayest *let him be unto thee* thenceforward *as a* lost and hardened man, whose Conversion thou art no longer bound in vain to labour after, such as we are wont to express by a *heathen Man and a Publican,* v. 15, 16, 17.

Take heed, lest by any means this Christian *Liberty of yours become a stumbling-block,* or scandal *to those that are weak,* by seducing and encouraging them, on the authority of your example to do that against their Conscience, which you, who know more, do according to it; *and so through thy knowledge, shall thy weak Brother Perish, for whom Christ died: But when ye sin so against the Brethren, and* by such unstrained liberty, *wond their weak Consciences, you sin against Christ,* 1 Cor. 8. 9, 11, 12. It is a most uncharitable thing, and *without Charity all things else will profit nothing,* 1 Cor. 13. 3. *For*

(*b*) Their practice in this case is thus described; *Qui arguit socium suum, debet primum hoc facere, placide inter se & ipsum solum verbis mollibus, ita ut non pudefaciat eum. Si respiscit, bene est; sin, debet eum acriter arguere, & pudefacere inter se, & ipsum. Si non respiscit, debet adhibere Socios, ipsúmq; coram illis pudore afficere; si nec modo quicquam profecit, debet eum pudefacere coram multis, ejúsq; delictum publicare. Nam certe delendi sunt Hypocritæ.* Lib. Mussar. cited by *Drusius.*

if thy brother be grieved, or scandalized *with thy* liberty in *meat* or other things, *now walkest thou not charitably*, if for all that thou abstain not from it; *destroy not him therefore with thy meats for whom Christ died*, Rom. 14. 15. But if any Man will still be prone to give Offence, his Sentence is severe and dreadful. *For he that shall offend*, or scandalize *one of these little ones, which beleive in me*; *'twere better for him that a milstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea*, Mat. 18. 6.

Rom. 14. 22.

And thus are all the particular Laws of Charity, and Justice also, imposed with the same strictness, and under the same necessity with the former.

Peace. And that the sanction is the same in the Particulars of the next Class, *viz. Peace*; will appear by what follows.

Peace. *Follow peace with all men, without which no man shall see the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. It is not enough that we accept of it when it is offered, but we must enquire it out and seek after it; nay, if it be denied us at first, we must endeavour after it still, and ensue it when it flies from us; and that not coldly or carelesly, with weak desires, or little industry, but with the greatest concern, and utmost diligence that possibly we can. *He that will love life and see good days*, saith S. *Peter*, *let him seek peace and ensue it*, 1 Pet. 3. 10, 11. *Be of the same* (e) *mind*, saith S. *Paul*, among those Laws which he enjoins by his Apostolical Authority, *Rom.* 12. *one towards another*; *mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. If it be possible*, and *as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all men*, ver. 16. 18. Yea, we must pay dear for it rather than want it, and bear long, and suffer much from Men before we contend with them, and use all arts and shew all kindness to pacifie and reconcile them. *Not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing*; *but contrariwise blessing*, or Benediction, *knowing* this *That we are thereunto called* in Christianity, *that* from our Lord Christ, who was so exemplary for it, *we should inherit* this Vertue of (f) speaking well and kindly of Men, or *blessing*, 1 Pet. 3. 9. *I say unto you*, says our Saviour, *resist not the evil*, or injurious (g) man, which is the way to inflame and consummate contention, *but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn*

(e) 1 Pet. 5. 8. Phil. 2. 1, 2. *Concord. Condescension. Peacableness.*

(f) εὐλογίαν. (g) τῷ πονηρῷ. *Forbearance or Long-suffering.*

to

to him the other also, and if any man will sue thee at the Law, and take away thy Coat, bear a little more, and rather than contend with him, *let him have thy Cloak also*, Mat. 5. 39, 40. Which Precepts, with all the others delivered in that Sermon, are bound upon us, as was observed, under the Forfeiture of all Right to Happiness and Heaven, *ver.* 19.

The Wisdom which cometh from above, and which must raise us thither, *is peaceable*, saith S. *James*, Jam. 3. 17. And S. *Paul* reckons it as one of the *Commandments, which were given* to the Thessalonians *by the Lord Jesus, that they* should *study*, even so as to be (*b*) ambitious of it, *to be quiet* or to acquiesce in their present state, and not to interrupt the quiet and tranquillity of other men, *and to do their own business*, 1 Thess. 4. 2, 11.

(*b*) φιλοτιμεῖσθαι. *Quietness. Doing our own business.*

The method of procuring Pardon for Injustce, is prescribed thus in the Law of *Moses*, *if a man commit a trespass* against another Man, *and be guilty, he shall come and recompence his trespass with the principal thereof, and* over and above that (*i*) *add unto it the fifth part thereof* more *and give it unto him against whom he hath trespassed*, Numb. 5. 6, 7. And Christ, although he do not define the particular proportion of the Compensation, doth yet establish this Satisfaction and Reconciliation of our selves to our injured Brother in the general, as an indispensible Duty, without which nothing, not our very Prayers or Oblations, shall be accepted, *If thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there remembrest that thy Brother hath ought against thee*, having been injured by thee; *leave there thy gift, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy Brother*, by giving him Satisfaction for thy Offence, *and then come and offer thy gift*, Matth. 5. 23, 24. Which command is moreover one of those, whose sanction is the *loss of heaven*, ver. 19.

Satisfying for injuries.

(*i*) Luke 19. 8.

Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God, Matth. 5. 9.

Peace-making.

And thus we see of all the Laws, which make any thing due to *God*, *our selves*, or *all mankind* in *general*; whether they are instances of *sobriety*, *piety*, *justice*, *charity*, or *peace*; that our obedience unto them all is made necessary unto Life, and that they are bound upon us by all our Hopes of Happiness and Heaven.

And

And the sanction is the same for all those Laws, which make some things due in *particular relations* likewise.

Laws in the relation of Subjects to our Kings. Subjection.

For as for the Laws, that bind us in the particular relation of *Subjects to our Kings*, their Sanction appears plainly from these places:

Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers; for there is no Power but of God; whosoever therefore resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves Damnation. Wherefore you must needs be subject, not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience-sake. render therefore to all their Dues; as these following are, to Kings, *Tribute to whom Tribute is due, Custom to whom Custom, Fear* or *Reverence to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour.* (i) Rom. 13. 1, 2, 5, 7. And all these are part of that Catalogue of Laws, which he begins to reckon up, and declares to them by his *Apostolical Authority*, Chap. 2. 17.

Paying Tribute and Custom. Reverence and Honour.

(i) 1 Pet. 12. ver. 3.

These things speak and exhort, rebuke with all Authority, and let no man despise thee, who shall surely be punished as a Contemner of Christ if he do. *Put them in mind to be subject to Principalities* and *Powers, to* (k) *obey Magistrates,* Tit. 2 ver. *ult.* & Chap. 3. ver. 1.

Obedience

(k) 1 Pet. 2. 2, 13, 14, 15.

I exhort therefore first of all, that Prayers of all sorts, *supplications, intercessions, petitions, and giving of thanks, be made for all Kings, and such as are in Authority; for this is* in it self, and will render us *good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour,* 1 Tim. 2. 1, 2, 3. and a proof moreover of that *good conscience,* which *Timothy* is charged to keep, *Chap. 1. ver.* 19.

Prayer for Kings.

And for *Fidelity* and *Allegiance,* this may suffice to shew its necessity, that among the *men of corrupt minds, who are reprobate concerning the Faith,* and who should render the *last times perilous, S. Paul* reckons *Traitors,* 2. *Tim.* 3. 1, 4, 8.

So that as for all the aforementioned Duties of this relation, we see their indispensible necessity, and that as ever we hope to be saved by them, we must perform and obey them.

Laws in the relation of people to their Pastors.

And so it is in the particular Law of the next relation, that of *people towards their spiritual Governours, viz.* their *Bishops* and *Ministers,* as is plain from these Texts following.

We

We beseech you, Brethren, to know them who labour among you, and are set *over you in the Lord, and to esteem* or honour *them very highly*, or (*l*) more than abundantly, *in love for their works sake*, 1 Thess. 5. 12, 13. And this is one of those Precepts, which are pressed upon them, as they would be *Children of light, and not of darkness*, ver. 5; and as they are *to avoid wrath*, and *to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ*, ver. 9.

Honour and Reverence for their works sake.

(*l*) ὑπὲρ ἐκπερισσοῦ.

Let him who is taught or (*m*) catechized *in the Word, communicate unto him that teacheth* or catechiseth *in all* (*n*) *good things. Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth* in this and other things, *that shall he also reap*, Gal. 6. 6, 7.

(*m*) κατηχούμενος.

(*n*) 1 Tim. 5. 17, 18. 1 Cor. 9. 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14.

(*o*) *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls. Pray for us*, Heb. 13. 17, 18. Which are part of the Precepts enjoyned as the way, *whereby to serve God acceptably, who is a consuming fire* to destroy and devour all who dare offend him, *Chap.* 12. 2 *last verses.*

Maintenance of Ministers. Obedience. Prayer for Ministers.

(*o*) πάντες τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ ἀκολουθεῖτε ὡς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς τῷ πατρὶ καὶ τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ ὡς τοῖς Ἀποστόλοις, Ignat. Ep. ad Smyrn. Ed. Voss. p. 6.

And for the necessity of the several Laws, in the particular relation of *Husband and Wife*; that will appear by what follows.

Laws in the relation of Husband and Wife.

For as for that Love which is strictly required betwixt them, *it ought*, says S. *Paul*, agreeably to the Words of God at the institution of Marriage, *They two shall be one Flesh*, to be such as People have *for their own Bodies*, Ephes. 5. 28. 31. Which cannot imply less, than an *affectionate concern*, and *communicating in each others joy or sorrow*; for if *one member* of a man's Body *suffer, all the rest*, as the Apostle observes, *suffer with it; and if one be honoured, all the rest rejoice with it: the Members all having the same care one for another*, 1 Cor. 12. 25, 26. And also a *bearing with each others infirmities*, as every man will do with those of his own Body; and *praying for each other*. And for particular Duties, we are told in the same fifth Chap. to the *Ephesians*, that the *Husband* must *condescend* and *comply* with his *Wife*, and part, not only with his own *self-will*, but, even with his own *life* for the greater Advantage. *Husbands love your Wives*, saith he, *even as Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it. So ought men*

Communicating in each others bliss or misery. Bearing each others infirmities. Praying for each other. On the Husband's side condescension, &c.

to love their Wives, as their own Bodies. And how that is, we all experience, *for no man ever yet hated his own flesh*, but *protecteth* it and *provideth* well and duly for it, or *nourisheth and cherisheth it*, v. 25. 28, 29. In which *love of his Wife*, as of his *own flesh*, is implied moreover, that his *Government* of her be (p) *flexible* and *obliging*; nothing being more contrary to our self-love, than to be commanded in *peremptorines* and *rigour*. And then, as for the particular Duties of the *Wife*, she is bid to be observant, or to *take care how to please her Husband*, 1 Cor. 7. 34. To submit her Will to his, and to be ready to perform what he enjoyns, as she is to do what God commands her. *Wives submit your selves unto your own Husbands, as unto the Lord; for the Husband is the Head of the Wife, as Christ is of the Church: therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ; so let the Wives be unto their own* (q) *Husbands in every thing*, Eph. 5. 22, 23, 24. And this submission she must shew in respectful Carriage, and such behaviour as argues in her a fear to give offence. *Let the Wife see that she reverence her Husband*, v. 33. And all these commands enjoining Duties both on one side and on the other, which are delivered in that Chapter, are required, as part of our *walking as Children of the light, and providing what is acceptable* unto the Lord, *v.* 8, 10. *Let the Husband render unto the Wife Due Benevolence, and likewise also the Wife unto the Husband. For the Wife hath not Power*, &c. 1 Cor. 7. 3, 4, 5.

Providing for her. *Protecting her.* *Flexible, winning Government.* (p) Col. 3. 19. 1 Pet. 3. 7. *On the Wife's side* *Observance, Subjection.* (q) Tit. 2. 5, 15. *Reverence.* *Rendring Due Benevolence.*

Marriage is honourable, and the Bed undefiled; but Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge, Heb. 13. 4. *Fidelity on both sides.*

Wives are to be *taught* to *be obedient to their own Husbands, that the word of God*, or Doctrine of the Gospel, *be not blasphemed*, Tit. 2. 5. *Let Wives be in subjection to their own Husbands. For with this in old time the holy women adorned themselves, even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling* and observing *him* as her *Lord, whose Daughters ye are as long as you do well*, and imitate her; but no longer, 1 *Pet.* 3. 5, 6. *Obedience, on the Wife's.*

So that all the Laws in this relation, are enjoined under the same necessity, and confirmed with the same sanction, as the former.

And as for the Particulars of the next relation, they are imposed with the same strictness. *Laws of Parents & Children.*

For *natural affection*, the want of it, as S. *Paul* affirms plainly, *makes men* * *worthy of death*, Rom. 1. 31. * 2 Tim. 3. 3.

The

The Children ought not to lay up † Treasure, or provide *for the Parents, but the Parents for the Children,* 2 Cor. 12. 14. And *if any man provide not for his own house, he hath denied the Faith of Christ,* which indispensibly enjoyns it; nay, despising such a notorious and necessary Precept of mere Nature, *he is worse than any* honest *Infidel,* 1 Tim. 5. 8.

† Θησαυριζειν. Gen.

On the Parents side, Maintenance or Provision.

Fathers provoke not your Children to wrath against you, by a harsh and austere Government of them, but rule them with Love and Gentleness; and *bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. And ye Children,* on the other side, * *obey your Parents in the Lord, for this is right.* † *Honour your Father and Mother, that it may be well with you,* Ephes. 6. 1, 2, 3, 4. Which Precepts are of the number of those, which he imposes on them as parts of *their walking as Children of the light,* and *proving what is acceptable unto the Lord,* chap. 5. 8, 10.

Loving Government. Religious education.

* Col. 3. 20, 21.

† Mat. 15. 4.

Obedience on the Childrens side. Honour. Requiting their Parents.

If any man have Children or Nephews, let them first learn to shew picty at home, and requite their Parents, for this is good and acceptable to God. But if any man provide not for his own, especially those of his own house or Family, as Parents are in the first place, *he hath denied the Faith,* and in his unnatural actions, *is worse than an* honest *Infidel,* 1 Tim. 5. 4, 8.

And thus are all the Laws of this relation likewise established in the greatest strictness, and our obedience to them is made plainly necessary to our bliss and happiness.

Laws in the relation of Brethren and Sisters. Laws in the relation of Masters and Servants.

And as for the particular Laws of *natural affection,* and *communicating* upon occasion *to each other of their Substance,* in the relation of *Brethren and Sisters*; they are proved to be necessary in the proof of the former: For the same places, which require them in that relation, require them in this also.

And then, as for the Particulars of the last relation, *viz.* that of *Masters* and *Servants*; they are of equal necessity with all the foregoing.

On the Masters side, Maintenance. Just and equal Government.

If any man provide not for his own house, whereof Servants are one part, *he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel,* 1 Tim. 5. 8.

Masters, give unto your Servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in Heaven, who will punish your unequal dealing towards them, *Col.* 4. 1. *If ye despise the cause of my man-servant, or of*

my

my maid-servant, when they argue in their own defence and *contend with me; what then shall I do when God rises up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?* Job 31. 13, 14.

Punctual payment of the wages of the Hireling.

Thou shalt not oppress an hired Servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy Brethren, a Jew *or a Stranger,* of the Gentiles. *At this* * *Day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the Sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it,* Deut. 24. 14, 15. † *Weep and houl, O ye rich men,* says S. *James, for the miseries that shall come upon you; for behold the hire of the Labourers, who have reaped down your Fields, and which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth* against you, *and the Cries are entred into the ears of the Lord,* who hearkens to them, and in great Justice will one Day avenge them, *James* 5. 1, 4.

* Lev. 19. 13.
† Jer. 22. 13.

Religious instruction.

Forbearing threatning.

Ye Masters do the same thing (viz. *good,* whether to their Bodies, in *providing for them,* or to their Souls, *in religious instruction, with a good will, in expectation of a reward from the Lord*) *to your Servants, forbearing threatning; knowing that your Master also is in Heaven,* who has threatned you if ye neglect this necessary Duty, *neither is there any respect of persons with him,* Ephes. 6. 8, 9.

On the Servants side, Honour.

Let as many Servants as are under the Yoke, count their own Masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God be not blasphemed, as certainly it would upon their contrary practice. *And if any man teach otherwise, he is proud, knowing nothing,* 1 Tim. 6. 1, 3, 4.

Obedience.

* ἁπλότητι.

Hearty service.

Reverence.

Servants, obey in all things your Masters according to the Flesh; not with eye-service, but in singleness or * sincerity *of heart,* without Fraud or double dealing, as persons *fearing God. And whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, not to men; knowing that of the Lord you shall receive the reward of the inheritance* for such your obedient practice; *for* in thus serving them, *you serve the Lord Christ,* Col. 3, 22, 23, 24. *Servants obey your Masters with fear and trembling; not with eye-service, as Men-pleasers, but from the heart, with good-will, doing service as to the Lord,* who demands this of you, and *not only to men; knowing that whatsoever good* or ill in this particular *any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord,* Ephes. 6. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Ex-

Exhort Servants to be obedient to their own Masters, and to please them well by all manner of observance *in all things*, either as to their Reputation in *vindicating it, when 'tis injured*, or *concealing such defects* as would stain and sully it, or their other Interests, *shewing all good fidelity. For the Grace of God, which brings salvation, hath appeared to all Men, teaching them*, as ever they hope to be saved by it, *that denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts*, whereof the contrary practices to these are the effect and offspring, *they should live soberly*, &c. *Tit.* 2. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. And moreover, these Precepts are part of that *sound Doctrine*, which *Titus* is required to *speak*, v. 1. in opposition to their Doctrine, who in the Verse before, are said to be *abominable*, *disobedient*, and *to every good work reprobate*.

Observance. *Vindicating their injured reputation.* *Concealing their defects.* *Fidelity.*

Servants be subject to your own Masters, with all fear or *reverence*; *not only to the good and gentle, but also to the* * hard or hasty and forward. *For this is thankworthy, if for Conscience towards God you* patiently *endure grief, suffering wrongfully. This is acceptable to God*, and likewise necessary for you; *for even hereunto were you called*, that you may be like to *Christ*, who has *left you an example* of such patient suffering for this end, *that you might follow his steps*, 1 Pet. 2. 18, 19, 20, 21, &c.

* σκολιοῖς.

And thus are all the particular Laws of this last relation, imposed in the same strictness of Obligation, and under the same severe sanction with all the rest that went before.

And as for the Law of *Baptism*, and of the *Lord's Supper*, and of Repentance and Amendment whensoever we fail in any of the former, which are all the commanding Laws yet remaining; their necessity will appear from the Scriptures following.

Except a man be born again of Water as well as *of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*, says Christ to *Nicodemus*, John 3. 5. And when Christ sends his Apostles out to preach to all the World, the Doctrine which he commissions them to declare is this, *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*, Mark 16. 16.

Baptism.

Take, eat, this is my Body; *Do this in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this Bread, and drink this Cup,*

Lord's Supper.

Cup, you do shew forth the Lord's death, which you must do *till he come* the second time to judge us, and to punish all impenitent Transgressors, as well of this, as of all his other Precepts, 1 *Cor.* 11. 24, 25, 26. *And this command*, he further says, *he received of the Lord to deliver to them*, v. 23. And for the fuller proof of the necessity of this Sacrament, that is very remarkable, which as some have observed, the *Jewish* Doctors have taken notice of, *viz.* that *whereas God forbad* twenty three things under *pain* of *being cut off from the people*, to them who *committed* them; yet in the whole *Old Testament* there are but *two* things *commanded* under *that penalty*, to those who should neglect them; and they are *Circumcision* and the *Passover*, which are *Types* and *Figures* of and answer to our two Sacraments, *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*. And for that necessity particularly of the *Passover* among the *Jews*, which answers to the *Eucharist* among us Christians, where, as the Apostle says, *Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us*, 1 Cor. 5. 7. we have a plain Text at the institution of it, *Exod.* 12. *Whosoever*, in the Feast of the Passover, *eateth leavened bread from the first Day to the seventh Day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel*, v. 15.

Repentance.

Repentance and remission of sins thereupon, is commanded *to be preached to all Nations*, Luke 24. 47. And as *Christ ordered*, so his *Apostles practised*. *Repent*, says S. *Peter*, in his first Sermon, *and be baptized for the remission of sins*, Acts 2. 38. But without this, there is no mercy for any wilful Offenders; for *except you repent*, says our Saviour, *you shall all perish*, Luke 13. 3.

And thus we have seen all the *commanding Laws* particularly, that our obedience to every one of them is plainly necessary to our salvation. They are that rule, which God has fixt to measure out to us either *Life* or *Death*, and which at the last Day we must all be eternally *acquitted* or *condemned* by.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Sanction of all the forbidding Laws.

AS for all the Vices opposite to the several Vertues in the foregoing *Chapter*, which are the number of the *negative* or *forbidding* Laws; they must needs be under the same sanction, and our observance of them be bound upon us by the same necessity, with our observance of the former. For whatsoever any of the particular Laws *commanding* any *Vertues* threaten, it is to these opposite *Vices*, which are the several transgressions of them. So that in shewing the *severe sanction* and necessity of the *one*, I have shewn it sufficiently of the *other* also.

And this might very well excuse me all further trouble, in searching after an express sanction of every particular forbidding Law.

But on the other side I consider, that men are infinitely concerned to be fully convinced of the particular necessity of abstaining from every Vice, as well as of performing every Vertue. And that there is much more force to work this full Conviction, in an express and particular proof, than there can be in a general and implicit intimation. And because I would shun no pains, which may be likely to quicken the obedience, or secure the interests even of any one soul; I will not leave it to mens selves to collect and infer this necessity, although the meanest capacities may do it without any great difficulty, but proceed still to set down such sanctions of all the particular *forbidding Laws*, as I meet with in the Holy Scriptures.

And to take the several Classes of them in that order, wherein they are described above, for the penalties threatned to all the particulars of *unsoberness*, they will appear from the places following. *Unsoberness. Adultery. Fornication. Uncleanness. Lasciviousness. Drunkenness. Revelling. Emulation.*

The works of the Flesh are manifest, saith S. *Paul*, *which are adultery, fornication,* uncleanness, lasciviousness,† drunkenness, revelling, emulation, of the which I tell you, that they who do such things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.*

* Matt. 5. 28. 30.

† Luke 21. 34.

Vain glory

And besides these, *if we live in the Spirit*, without which there is no hopes of happiness, *Rom.* 8. 6. *let us not be* desirous of * *vain-glory, provoking one another*, Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21, 25, 26.

* Pr. 27. 2.

αὐτεπαινέτους μισεῖ ὁ θεὸς, Clem. Rom. 1. Ep. ad Cor. chap. 30.

Effeminateness.

Sodomy.

Ravishers.

Fearfulness.

Whoredom.

Filthiness.

Obscene Jesting.

Covetousness.

* Μαλακοί.

† ἅρπαγες.

* 1 Cor. 5. 11. and 6. 10.

Neither the effeminate, or who * suffer themselves to be unnaturally abused, *nor the abusers of themselves with mankind, nor extortioners* or † *ravishers*, and men who commit * rapes, *shall inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.

But the fearful and soft, *the abominable*, or* abusers of themselves with mankind, *and whoremongers shall have their part in the Lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death*, Rev. 21. 8.

* ἐβδηλυγμένοι

† ωρεολογία.

* Col. 3. 8.

† εὐτραπελία.

Let not filthiness nor † fooliſh or * obscene *talking nor jesting* in † filthy jests be so *much as named among you. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, or covetous man*, &c. *hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of God, and of Christ. Let no man deceive you, for these things sake cometh the wrath of God upon the Children of disobedience*, Ephes. 5. 3, 4, 5, 6.

Carnality.

Covetousness. Pride.

Arrogance.

Incontinence.

Haughtiness.

Insolence.

Sensuality.

In the last Days perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of themselves, or of their own * Flesh, *covetous, proud, boasters*, or † arrogant, *incontinent, high-minded*, or * enormously haughty in behaviour, or insolent, *lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God*, or † *sensual, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away, for they are men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith*, 1 Tim. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8.

* Rom. 8. 6, 18.

1 Tim. 5. 6.

† ἀλάζωναι.

* τετυφωμένοι.

† Jude 19.

Backbiters.

Boasters, or * arrogant, *which in the judgment of God are worthy of death*, Rom. 1. 29, 30, 32.

* ἀλαζόνας.

Gluttony.

The Servant, that shall begin to eat and to drink with the drunken, shall have his portion appointed with Hypocrites, in the place where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, Matt. 24. 49, 51.

Voluptuousness.

Worldliness.

† James 5. 5.

Many are enemies of the Cross of Christ, whose God is their Belly, which they carefully serve in *voluptuous eating, who* are altogether † *worldly*, and *mind earthly things; whose end is destruction*, Phil. 3. 18, 19. *Ye have*

have lived in pleasure on the earth, and have been wanton; or ye have * lived deliciously, and fared luxuriously: *Ye have nourished* or † fed *your hearts* as men use to do Cattle which they intend for the Shambles, against, or *in a day of slaughter. Weep therefore, and houl for the miseries that shall come upon you,* James 5. 1, 5.

* ἐτρυφήσατε καὶ ἐσπαταλήσατε. † ἐθρέψατε.

Love not the world, nor covet and *ambitiously* pursue the rich and splendid *things of the world.* But *if any man* do *love the world, the love of the Father is not in him,* 1 Joh. 2. 15. *Ambition.*

Blessed is he, who shall not be offended in me, or not † scandalized and turned out of the way and profession of my Religion, through any difficulties or persecutions that befall him in it, *Matth.* 11. 6. For he who will save *his life* in this world, by fleshly policy and wicked compliances against his Duty, *shall lose it* in the world to come; *but whosoever shall lose his life*, or other temporal enjoyments *for my sake*, or for an honest owning of my Laws and Religion, that same man *shall find it*, Matth. 16. 25. † σκανδαλισθῇ. *Refusing of the Cross.* *Impiety.*

And for the prohibitions of the second Class, *impiety*, we have their penalty expressed in the Text ensuing. * Exod 20. 4, 5.

The works of the Flesh are manifest, * *idolatry*, *witchcraft*; *of which I tell you, that they who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21. *Idolatry.* *Witchcraft.*

But the † *unbelievers, and sorcerers, and idolaters shall have their part in the Lake which burns with fire and brimstone*; *which is the second death*, Rev. 21. 8. † Mark 16. 16. *Unbelief.* *Sorcery.*

The wicked man hath said in his heart, God hides his face, he will never * *see* what men do, and therefore *he will not require* an account of *it.* But *thou, Lord, dost behold mischief and spite*, and that too *to punish* and *requite it with thy hand*, Psal. 10. 11, 13, 14. * Psal. 64. 5, 7. *Denying providence.*

Being haters of God, without † *understanding*, or foolish, *which* in the judgment of God *are worthy of death*, Rom. 1. 30, 31, 32. † Mark. 7. 22. Tit. 3. 3. *Hating God.* *Foolishness.*

In the last days perilous times shall come, for men shall be * *Blasphemers, unthankful, unholy, heady*,; and these are men *of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith*, 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2, 4, 8. * Mat. 15. 19, 20. *Blasphemy.* *Unthankfulness.* *Headiness.*

They that despise and dishonour *me, shall be lightly set by*, 1 Sam. 2. 30. *Because* *Dishonour.*

Want of Zeal. *Because thou* hast no zeal for me, but *art lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold*; *I will spew thee*, as men do warm water, which the stomach loaths and nauseates, *out of my mouth*, Rev. 3. 16. *If we deny him, he also will deny us*, 2 Tim. 2. 12. And our *being ashamed* of, and not *owning* and *maintaining* him and his *Religion*, although it be at a time when impiety is barefaced, in an *adulterous and sinful Generation*, is interpreted by him for such *damnable denial* of him. For what is called *denying me and my words*, Matth. 10. 33. is upon another occasion repeated in S. *Mark* and expressed by *being ashamed of them*, Mark 8. 38.

Perjury. † Deut. 5. 11. * Jam. 5. 12. *Common swearing.* *Ye have heard that it hath been said in old time, Thou shalt not forswear* or † perjure *thy self, but shalt perform unto the Lord thy Vows. But* in addition to this *I say unto you, Swear not at all* in your common * converse, *but let your communication* or ordinary discourse *be yea, yea, and nay, nay*; *for whatsoever be more than these, cometh of evil*, Matth. 5. 33, 34, 37. And these Precepts are of the number of those, whereof Christ had expressly said, *ver.* 19. *He who breaks the least of these Commandments, shall be least* or none at all *in the Kingdom of Heaven.*

Disobedience. *Prophaneness.* *The Law*, with its terrors and severe sanctions, *is not made for a righteous man*, who would do what it requires without them; *but for the Lawless and disobedient, for ungodly, for unholy and prophane, for perjured persons*, that by means of its dreadful punishments, it might either *fright* them from sinning, or take *vengeance* on them after they should have sinned against it, 1 *Tim.* 1. 9, 10.

* 1 Cor. 10. 10, 11. *Contumacy. Injustice. Adultery. Murther. Covetousness. Deceit. Perfidy. Circumvention. Oppression.* *Wo unto him that strives*, through * *contumacious* and *repining* carriage, *with his Maker*, Isa. 45. 9.

And for the necessity of observing the prohibitions of the third Head, *injustice towards men*, take these places:

The works of the Flesh are manifest, Adultery, Murder; of which I tell you, that they who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, Gal. 5. 19, 21.

Being filled with all unrighteousness, covetousness, deceit, covenant-breakers, or perfidious, *who in the judgment of God are worthy of death*, Rom. 1. 29, 30, 31, 32.

† 1 Per. 2. 1, 2, 3. *This is the will of God*, That *no man go beyond and defraud his Brother in any matter*, or way whatsoever, whether it be extortion, oppression, or plain † cozenage; *for the Lord*

Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forwarned you, and testified, 1 *Thess.* 4. 3, 6.

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither thieves, nor covetous shall inherit the Kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. *Stealing or Thievery.*

In the last Days perillous times shall come; for men shall be Truce-breakers, false Accusers, or Slanderers and Calumniators; *from such turn away, for they are men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith,* 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2, 3, 5, 8. *Slander. False witness.*

Out of the heart proceed thefts, false witness, murders; these defile or pollute *the man,* and so exclude him from Heaven, where nothing can ever enter that is unholy and unclean, *Mat.* 15. 19, 20. * Lev. 25. 14. Luke 18. 11. *Extortion.* † 1 Pet. 2. 12. *Lying.*

Thou hast greedily gained of thy Neighbour, by * *extortion, therefore I have smitten my hand at thy dishoneſt gain. Can thy heart endure, or thy hands be made strong in the day when I shall deal with thee?* Ezek. 22. 12, 13, 14. *Uncharitableness.* * 1 Tim. 6. 4, 5. *Maliciousness.*

All † *Lyars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death,* Rev. 21. 8. † Mat. 6. 14.

And as for all the particulars of *uncharitableness,* we have their sanction in these scriptures following: * *ὑ βεισὰς: Wickedness.*

Being filled with wickedness, maliciousness, full of * *envy, malignity, whisperers, back-biters,* † *despiteful;* or * contumelious, *implacable, unmerciful; who in the judgment of God are* all *worthy of death,* Rom. 1. 29, 30, 31. *Envy. Malignity. Whispering. Backbiting. Implacable. Unmerciful. Contumely.*

Recompence to no man evil for evil, avenge not your selves; but rather, instead of that, *give place unto wrath,* Rom. 12. 17, 19. *For if ye forgive not,* but revenge upon men *their trespasses; neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses,* Mat. 6. 15. Deal thus therefore with your enemies, *not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing* or benediction, *knowing* this *that hereunto are ye called in* Christianity, *to inherit* from Christ's example this *Vertue* of *blessing* or speaking well of them, who revile you. And this is no indifferent thing. *For he that will love life, and see good days, must* thus *refrain his tongue from evil,* 1 Pet. 3. 9, 10. *Revenge. Reproach. Enemies.* † Mat. 5. 22. *Bitterness. Anger. Wrath. Clamour. Evil-speaking. Malice.*

Let all † *bitterness and anger, and wrath* or hatred, *and clamour* or brawling, *and* * *evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice.* Ephes. * 1 Pet. 2. 1, 2, 3.

phes. 4. 31. And that *if you have been taught as the truth is in Jesus to put off the old man, and to put on the new,* ver. 20, 21, 22, 24.

Exhort and rebuke with all authority, and let no man despise thee, (lest in doing so he be judged as a Despiser of Christ also, *Luke* 10. (6.) *Put them in mind to speak evil of no man,* to *be no Brawlers* or † Quarrellers; *but gentle, shewing all meekness,* opposite to surliness, *unto all men,* Tit. 2. *ult.* & Chap. 3. 1, 2.

† ἀμάχους. *Surliness.*

In the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be unthankful, fierce, Despisers and * *Haters of those that are good. From such turn away, for they are men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith,* 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2, 3, 5, 8.

* ἀφιλάγαθοι. *Unthankfulness. Despising and hating good men.*

Charity suffers long before it be provoked, and so is not *hasty* to punish; and *is* also *kind* or * courteous, and so not *uncourteous. Charity is not puffed up,* doth not † swell and exalt it self above others in *stateliness* or *difficulty of access* and uncondescension, but is condescensive and affable; *doth not behave it self unseemly* or * contumeliously; *seeks not her own* praise or pleasure at other mens loss or shame, and therefore neither *mocks,* nor *upbraids,* nor *reproaches* any; *is not provoked easily,* or not unto the † height, but mixes mercifulness with anger in exacting punishment; which is opposite to *rigour*; *thinks* or * imputeth *no evils* or vices to men, who are guilty of them, in *railing* and *reproach,* but kindly overlooks or lessens them as we are wont to do with persons whom we love; *rejoiceth not in* evil, and least of all in the highest sort of it, *iniquity* of men, 1 *Cor.* 13. 4, 5, 6. And without this Charity, all other things whatsoever will at the last Day *profit nothing,* v. 3.

* χρηστεύεται. † φυσιοῦται. * ἀσχημονεῖ. *Hastiness to punish. Uncourteousness. Difficulty of access. Uncondescension. Contumely. Mocking. Upbraiding. Reproaching.* † παροξύνεται. *Rigour.* * οὐ λογίζεται κακόν. *Rejoycing in evil.*

The works of the flesh are manifest, which are hatred, envying, variance or * debate, *Gal.* 5. 19, 20, 21.

Variance or Debate. *2 Cor. 12. 20.

Be not deceived, no revilers shall enter into the Kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. *I write unto you, that if any* Christian *Brother be a railer,* to excommunicate him, and *with such an one* to use no conversation, no *not so much as to eat,* 1 Cor. 5. 11. And our Lord himself hath determined *whatsoever you shall bind* by excommunication *on earth shall be bound* also *in heaven,* Mat. 18. 18.

Railing or reviling.

Judge

Judge not, or be not forward to pass † undervaluing and censorious judgments upon what other Men do or say, *that you be not judged. For with what Judgment you judge* others, you *shall be judged* your selves, both by God and Men, who will repay you in your own kind, *Mat.* 7. 1, 2. Which Precept we must note moreover, is one of those whereof Christ affirms, that *whosoever breaks the least of them shall be least in the Kingdom of Heaven*, Chap. 5. v. 19. Make not your self a Judge to censure and give Sentence against any one, and you shall not have Sentence given against you.

Censoriousness.

† Steph. MS reads μὴ καλαδικάζητε καὶ μὴ καταδικασθῆτε.

At the Day of Judgment Christ will say unto the uncharitable, *depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire. For* in my poor Members *I was hungry, and you gave me no meat; thirsty, and you gave me no drink; naked, and you gave me no cloaths; a Stranger, and you were unhospitable, and took me not in. For in as much as ye refused it, and did it not to the very least of these, ye did it not to me*, Mat. 25. 41, 42, 43, 45.

Uncharitableness in Alms. Unhospitableness.

Wo unto the World because of offences or * *scandals; for it must needs be that offences come, but woe unto that Man by whom the offence* or *scandal cometh*, Mat. 18. 7.

* Σκάνδαλα. *Scandalizing weak Brethren. Discord.*

And as for all the prohibiting Laws under the sin of *discord*, their penalty is expressed in these places:

† ἐριθείαι. *Emulation or provoking one another. Strife or Contention. Seditions. Heresies. Schism.*

The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, hatred or † *enmity, variance, emulation, strife* or *contention, seditions* or *divisions, heresies, envyings; of the which I tell you, that they who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21. And *if we live in the Spirit, let us not be desirous of vain-glory, provoking one another*, v. 25, 26.

Mark those which are turbulent and contentious, or *cause divisions and offences* among you, *contrary to the Doctrine which you have learned, and* * *avoid them. For they that are such, serve not the Lord Jesus Christ*; Rom. 16. 17, 18. *Whereas there is among you strife and divisions, are ye* not carnal? 1 Cor. 3. 3. And what the punishment of that is, we are told in plain terms, *for to be carnally minded is Death*, Rom. 8. 6, 13.

Unpeaceableness.

* μὴ πλανᾶσθε ἀδελφοί μου. ἔστις σχίζοντας ἀκολουθεῖ σαπείαν θεῷ καὶ κληρονομεῖ.

Study so as to be † ambitious of it, *to be quiet*, which directly forbids all unpeaceableness, *and to do your own bu-*

† Ignat. Ep. ad Phil. Ed. Voss. p. 40. φιλοτιμεῖσθαι. *Unpeaceableness.*

* 2 Thes. 3. 11, 12. 1 Pet. 4. 15. *Busiebodies.* *Tale-bearing.*

sinesse, not * busying your selves in other Men's Matters. Which are of the number of those Commands, that *were given them by the Lord Jesus*; so that *he who despiseth them, despiseth not Men, but God*, 1 Thess. 4. 2, 8, 11.

Thou shalt not go up and down as a Tale-bearer among thy People: I am the Lord, to judge and punish any Man that doth, *Lev.* 19. 16.

Tumults.

I fear when I come, there will be found among you *debates, tumults; and I shall* be forced to *bewail many*, or excommunicate them with mourning over them, as over a Dead Body at a Funeral, which was the custom of the Apostles times, 2 *Cor.* 12. 20, 21.

Laws in the relation of Subjects to our Sovereigns.

And as for the prohibitions in the particular relation of *Subjects* to our Sovereign *Princes*, their sanction is expressed in the Texts ensuing.

Dishonour. *Irreverence.* *Speaking evil of Dignities.*

The filthy Dreamers who despise dominion, which implies both dishonour and irreverence of it, *and speak evil of Dignities, were before ordained to condemnation*, Jude 4. 8, 9.

Resisting lawful Powers. *Rebellion.* *Refusing Tribute and Taxes.* *Disobedience.*

Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers; for they that resist and *rebel* against the Men in *power* and *authority, shall receive to themselves damnation. Render therefore*, in fear of that penalty, *Tribute to whom Tribute, and Custom to whom Custom is due*, Rom. 13. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7.

Traitors.

Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man, and be obedient to it, *for the Lord's sake*, from whom you shall receive a severe recompence of all your Disobedience; *whether* it be *to the King* himself *as supreme, or unto* lower *Officers* and deputed *Governours, as unto those who are sent by him*, 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14.

Laws in the relation of People to their Pastors. *Dishonour.* *Irreverence.* *Evil-speaking.* *Mocking.* *Setting them at nought for their works sake.* *Disobedience.*

In the last Days, perillous times shall come, for Men shall be fierce, traitors, &c. *from such turn away, for they are Men of corrupt Minds, reprobate concerning the faith*, 2 Tim. 3. 1, 4, 5, 8.

And as for the particular prohibitions, in the relation of *people* to their *Bishops* and *Pastors*, their penalty is the same with the others already mentioned.

He *that despiseth you*, (either your Persons, by dishonour, irreverence, evil speaking, mocking, setting you at nought for your works sake; or your Message and Commands, by Disobedience;) in God's account *despiseth me* also, whose Messengers and Ambassadours you are; and in like manner *he that despiseth me, despiseth him* withal *who sent me*, Luke 10. 16.

Do you not know, that they which minister in the Jewish Worship and Temple *about holy things, live of the* maintenance of the *Temple? And that they which wait* in sacrificing *at the Altar, are partakers* of some portion of the Sacrifices *with the Altar; even so hath God ordained* amongst us, like as he did among them, *that they who preach the Gospel should* for that have a due maintenance and livelihood, and * *live of the Gospel. And say I this as a Man,* only from common reason, equity and custom; *or saith not* God, by a preremptory way of command in *the Law, the same also;* For there *it is written, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the Ox, which treadeth out the Corn. Which is said not for the Oxen alone, but for our sakes no doubt,* that we might not grudge the Labourer his hire, 1 *Cor.* 9. 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14. And as he who should despise this Law under *Moses*, could not escape death; so much less can we, since Christ has made it one of his Laws, if we despise it now, *Heb.* 2. 2, 3.

Not providing for them, or not maintaining them.

* Gal. 6. 6. Matt. 10. 10. 1 Tim. 5. 17, 18.

Thou that sayest a Man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that abhorrest Idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? By such scandalous Sins as these, *the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written,* &c. *Rom.* 2. 21, 22. 24.

Sacrilege.

And as for the prohibitions in the relation of *Husband* and *Wife*, their sanction is the same also,

Laws in the relation of Husband and Wife. Unconcernedness. Estrangedness.

No Man ever yet hated his own Flesh, so as to be estranged to it, or unconcerned for it, or not to bear with its infirmities, but by rubbing upon every sore place to vex and provoke it; or not to hide and conceal its weaknesses, but to publish and discover them. And as unnatural is this usage between Man and Wife, *for they two are one flesh*, Ephes. 5. 29, 31. Which prohibition of hatred between Man and Wife, as between a Man and his own Flesh, is set down as a necessary part of *ceasing to be darkness, and becoming light in the Lord*, v. 8.

Not bearing each others infirmities. Provoking one another. Publishing their mutual defects.

No Adulterer shall inherit the Kingdom of God, Gal. 5. 19, 21.

Adultery.

Husbands love your Wives, and be not bitter or passionate, uncomplying and imperious, *against them.* And this you must do, as you would be accounted the *holy and elect of God*, Col. 3. 12, 19.

On the Husbands side, Imperiousness. Uncomplyance.

He that provides not convenient maintenance, *especially for his own house*, whereof the Wife is the chief Member, *hath denied the Faith* of Christ, *and is worse than an Infidel*, 1 Tim. 5. 8.

Not maintaining his Wife.

Teach

Disobedience of the Wives.

Teach Wives to be obedient to their own Husbands, lest if they disobey them, *the Word of God* or the Christian Religion, *be blasphemed*, for such Disobedience of Women that profess it, *Tit.* 2. 5.

Laws in the relation of Parents and Children.

And as for the prohibitions in the relation of *Parents* and *Children*, what their sanction is, these places will inform us.

Want of natural affection.

In the last days, perilous times will come; for Men will be * Ro. 1. 31, 32. *without* * *natural affection, disobedient to Parents; from such turn away, for they are People of corrupt minds and reprobate concerning the Faith*, 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2, 3, 5, 8.

Disobedience in Children.

They who provide not for their own house, and especially for so near a part of it as their own Children are, *have denied the Faith*, and are become *worse than Infidels*, 1 Tim. 5. 8.

Parents not providing for their Children.

Provoking them to anger.

Fathers provoke not your Children to wrath and hatefulness of you, by a rigorous and harsh Government of them, *but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, Ephes. 6. 4. which are part of those Precepts, the Obedience whereof is necessarily required to our being accepted as *Children of the Light*, Chap. 5. v. 8.

Irreligious education.

He that * *Curseth*, by reproaching and publishing the shame of *his Father and Mother, shall surely be put to death*, Exod. 21. 17.

* Prov. 20. 20. Gen. 9. 22, 25.

Reproaching Parents. Contempt and mocking them.

The eye that mocketh at his Father, and despiseth to obey his Mother, although the offence be not come so far as words, but is only a scornful and contemptuous look, a jeering and abusive countenance; *The Ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young Eagles shall eat it*, Prov. 30. 17.

Robbing them.

He that robbeth Father, and Mother, and saith it is no Transgression, but an innocent action, in regard he takes nothing but what either is, or one day will be his own; *the same is the Companion of a destroyer, i. e.* he deserves to die as well as a Murtherer, *Prov.* 28. 24.

Contumacy.

If a Man have a stubborn or *contumacious* and *rebellious Son, who will not obey the voice of his Father or Mother when they have chastened him; let them bring him to the Elders* or *Rulers of his City, and to the Gates*, (wherein were the Courts of Judicature,) *of his place, and let him be stoned to death*, Deut. 21. 18, 19, 20, 21.

And

And as for the prohibitions, in the relation of *Brethren* and *Sisters*, we have their penalty established in these words.

Without natural affection, who in the judgment of God are worthy of death, Rom. 1. 31, 32.

He that provides not for his own, is worse than an Infidel, 1 Tim. 5. 8.

And as for the prohibitions, in the last relation, *viz.* that of *Masters* and *Servants*, their sanction is expressed in the places following.

Masters give unto your Servants that which is just and equal, knowing that you your selves *also have a Master in Heaven* (who will recompence your injustice, rigour, and unequal Government of them upon your own heads, as Christ hath plainly shewed to us in the *Parable of the Servants*, Matt. 18. from v. 23. to the end of the Chapter) *Col.* 4. 1.

Masters love your Servants, forbearing threatning, and what is near akin to it, opprobrious language or railing; *knowing that your Master also is in Heaven, who*, in judging and punishing such offences as these, *is no respecter of persons*, Ephes. 6. 9.

If any Man provide not for his own house or Family, whereof his Servants are one part, *he is worse than an Infidel*, 1 Tim. 5. 8.

Weep and howl, O ye rich Men, for the miseries that shall come upon you. For the hire of the Labourers, which is of you kept back by fraud, cryeth against you for vengeance, *and the Cries are entred into the ears of the Lord*, who will most severely punish this injustice. *James* 5. 1, 4.

Exhort Servants to be obedient to their own Masters, and not to be unobservant of them, but to give all diligence *to please them well in all things. Not answering again, not purloining*; not being false or unfaithful in any matter, *but shewing all good fidelity. These things speak and exhort with all authority, let no man* dare, under the pain of God's high displeasure, to *despise thee*, Tit. 2. 9, 10, 15. which things, amongst others, he is bid to teach, in opposition to some who vented contrary Doctrines, who upon the account of those Rules, which they gave their Followers opposite to these, are called *abominable, disobedient, and to every good work reprobate*, Chap. 1. 16.

Laws in the relation of Brethren and Sisters.
Want of natural affection.
Laws in the relation of Masters and Servants.
On the Masters side, unjustness, and rigour in commanding.
Unequal Government of them.
Immoderate threatning.
Railing at them.
Not maintaining them.
Defrauding the hireling of his wages.
On the Servants side.
Disobedience.
Unobservance.
Answering again.
Purloining.
Unfaithfulness.

Let

Dishonour. Irreverence. Publishing or aggravating their Masters faults. *Let as many Servants, as are under the Yoke, count their own Masters worthy of all honour,* and not despise and dishonour them by their irreverent behaviour, publishing their faults and wounding their reputation; *that the Name of God,* and the Christian Doctrine, *be not blaspbemed* or evel spoken of through the contrary usage. *If any man teach otherwise, he is proud, knowing nothing,* 1 Tim. 6. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Eye-service. * ἐν ἁπλότητι. *Servants obey your Masters, not with eye-service, but heartily and in singleness* or * simplicity *of heart* without acting double, *viz.* something whilst their eye is over you, but nothing when it is off you; which you are bound to do, not only out of a dread of your Master's anger, but as *fearing God,* who will be sure to punish you, although your Master should not take notice of you, *Col.* 3. 22.

Contumacy. † ἐπιεικέσι. *Servants be* not stubborn and contumacious, but *subject to your Masters with all fear* and reverence; and that *not only to the good and gentle,* or † equitable and moderate, *but also the hasty* and morose or *Froward. For if when you do well and suffer for it, you yet take it patiently; this* truly *is thank-worthy and acceptable to God.* And indeed *hereunto are you called* in Christianity, *to suffer* many times unjustly, but still with patience, *as Christ did,* that hereafter you may reign with him also, 1 *Pet.* 2. 18, 19, 20, 21.

This is our observation of these particular prohibitions, plainly necessary unto life, and indispensibly required to Mercy and Salvation. And as for that small remainder of them, which are not expressly insisted on in this proof, their necessity is sufficiently evidenced by the indispensibleness of the opposite Commands, which in the proof of the *affirmative* Laws is shewn expressly.

As to all the particular Laws then recited in the foregoing Catalogues, whether they be *affirmative* or *negative Commands* or *Prohibitions,* 'tis plain that they are all bound upon us by the severest sanction, no less than our *fears of Hell* and *hopes of Heaven.* They are the adequate and compleat matter of that *Obedience,* which is to make us sure of a happy Sentence. At the last Day, we must all stand or fall by them; where they promise, God will bestow rewards, but if they threaten, he will eternally condemn us.

And

And thus at length it plainly appears, what those *particular laws* are, which under the sanctions of Life or Death, the Gospel indispensibly binds us to obey. And upon the whole we see, that when we become Christians, we are not turned loose, and set liberty to do what we list; but are put under a most strict Rule, and bound up by a most exalted purity, and a most compleat and perfect love. The height of our Duty, is answerable to the greatness of our Privileges and Advantages; For as never any People had so much * Grace given to them, as we Christians have by the Gospel, so never was there of any so much Duty required.

* Luk. 12. 48.

The poor *Heathens*, who knew nothing more, either of God's Laws, or of his rewards and encouragements, than they could argue themselves into a belief of by the strength of their own wit and reason; knew nothing of, nor shall at the last Day be condemned for the Transgression of several of those Commands, which we shall die for. So far were they from thinking, that in the judgment of God, *lasciviousness*, *uncleanness*, † *filthy talk*, *and obscene jests*, deserved death, that as wise men as any among them did not believe it of * *Fornication* and *Whoredom* it self. They were in no fear of being called to account then, and being found liable to eternal punishment for being *angry at an enemy*, for * *cursing* or *reproaching*, for *praying to the Gods against him*, nay nor for other higher acts of *malice* and *revenge*. They never dreamed of being condemned for *censoriousness*, *uncourteousness*, *surliness*, *malignity*, *mockery*, *upbraiding*, *reproach*; and least of all for *scandalizing an ignorant and weak Neighbour*, or *not relieving an enemy*, for *not taking up the Cross*, or *not mortifying their own Bodies*. † Vain-glory and emulation they looked upon, as deserving *commendation* rather than *reproof*: And *boasting* and *ostentation*, when it had no mixture of ill design, but was only for boasting sake, even they, who would find fault with it, rebuke it only as a * *vanity*, but not as a *mortal crime*. The most that any of them could say of these, or of several others, which it would be too tedious to mention, was that it would be a point of *praise* for

† *Placet Stoicis suo quamque rem nomine appellare. Sic enim differunt, nihil esse obscœnum, nihil turpe dictu, &c.* Cic. Ep. ad Famil. l. 9. Ep. 22. quæ est ad L. Papyrium Petum.

* To prevent Adulteries, this sage *Cato* adviseth to, *Quidam notus homo cum exieret Fornice, Macte virtute esto, inquit Sententia Dia Catonis*, &c. Horat: lib. 1. Ser. Sat. 2 *Nemo hic prohibet, nec vetat, quin quod palam*

est venale, for Men to observe them, but not of *Duty*; they might *si argentum est emas. Nemo ire quenquam publica prohibet via; dum ne per fundum septum facias semitam; dum tete abstineas nupta, vidua, Virgine, Juventute & Pueris liberis, ama quod lubet, Plautus* de usu Meretricum in Curculeone, Act. 1. Scen. 1.

be *advised* to it by a sage *Philosopher*, but had it not *imposed* upon them as they thought, and *commanded* by a *Judge* and *Lawgiver*.

And *Cicero* in his defence of *Marcus Cœlius*: *Vincat aliquando* [*in adolescentibus*] *cupiditas rationem, dummodo parcat juventus pudicitiæ suæ, ne spoliet alienam*, &c. *Si quis Meretriciis amoribus interdictum juventuti putet, est ille quidem valde severus, abhorret non modo ab hujus seculi licentia, verum etiam à majorum consuetudine ac concessis. Quando enim hoc non factum est? Quando reprehensum? Quando non permissum?* Cic. Orat. pro *M. Cœlio*. Upon the account of this Gentile opinion of the lawfulness of Fornication, and because they reputed it as an indifferent thing, although really and in it self it were most necessary, it is sorted amongst other indifferent things in the Canons made for the Gentile World at the Council of *Jerusalem*, Acts 15. 20, 28, 29.

* *Minerva* in *Homer*, when she advises *Achilles* to cease the quarrel with *Agamemnon*, and to keep off from fighting and blows: doth yet allow him this liberty, ἀλλ' ἤτοι ἔπειτα μὴν ὀνείδισον, Il. α.

† *Nullum aliam Virtus mercedem laborum periculorumque desiderat, præter hanc Laudis & Gloriæ: qua quidem detracta, quid est quod in hoc tam exiguo vitæ curriculo, & tam brevi, tantis nos in laboribus exerceamus?* Cic. Orat. pro Arch. Poet. sub finem.

* Ὁ μείζω ἢ ὑπερχόντων προσποιούμενος [Which is his definition of ἀλαζών] μηδενὸς ἕνεκα φαυλῷ μὴ ἔοικεν, ὃ φαίνηται μᾶλλον ἢ κακὸς, Arist. Eth. Nicom. l. 4. c. 7.

Thus dark and defective was that sense of Duty, which governed the *Heathen World*. The privilege of a clear and full revelation of it, which God in *great degrees* afforded to the *Jews* under the Law of *Moses*, and to us *Christians* in the *compleatest measures* under the Gospel of Christ, was a Grace and Favour, which he did not vouchsafe them. *He shewed*, as the Psalmist says, *his Word unto Jacob, and his Statutes unto Israel*; but he *hath not dealt so with any of the* heathen *Nations*; *for as for his Judgments*, or those Laws which we are to be judged by, *they have not known* several of *them*, Psal. 147. 19, 20.

And since not only the poor and *ignorant*, but even the more *wise* and *learned* sort of Heathens, were thus void of knowledge in the simplicity of their hearts, and did

did not discern several of those to be Laws of God which every one of us may discern most clearly if we will: although we must stand or fall by them, yet they shall not; but when they are brought to Judgment, they shall go unpunished for their transgressions of them, because they did not know them. They shall not be condemned for acting against they knew not what, nor suffer for the breach of such Laws as were not sufficiently published and proclaimed to them. *They that sinned without* our *Law, shall also perish*, not by it, but *without* our *Law*, according to the Sentence of such other Laws, as are, not ours, but their own; *and* it is only *as many as have sinned in* or under our *Law, that shall be judged* and *condemned* by the Law, Rom. 2. 12. Whatsoever they may suffer then, for their Transgressions of their *own plain natural Laws*, which all of them might have known who had a mind to it: They shall not be punished for their ignorant breach of such as are *peculiarly* ours, but that part of their offences shall be overlooked, and graciously connived at. For *these times of Ignorance*, saith the Apostle, *God winked* or *connived at*, Acts 17. 30.

And as for the *Jews*, although they had a *stricter rule* and a *more perfect precept*, answerable to their *clearer light* and *expresser promises*; yet were many (*m*) things still *for the* (n) *hardness of their hearts* indulged to them; for which without Repentance we shall smart most severely, if we are guilty of them. A man might be innocent in the charge made against him by the Law of *Moses*, although he should *return ill for ill*, or (o) *retaliate injuries* and *curse* and *pray against his Enemies*. And this their most *righteous Persons*, and *greatest Prophets*, even * *Jeremiah*, and (*p*) *David* himself, who was the Man after God's own heart, have done frequently. They had no express Law threatning death to bare *sensuality* and *worldliness*; but the very constitution of their Law which consisted mainly, if not wholly, in temporal promises, seemed much to encourage it. They were in no danger of being condemned by *Moses*, for not *bearing with the infirmities and weaknesses of their wives*, since their Law it

(n) Mat. 19. 8.

(o) Matt. 5. 38.

* Jer. 18. 21.

(*p*) Psal. 5. 8. 10. and 7, 6. and 28. 24. and 35. 8. and 109. from vers. 1. to the 20. all which Curses appear to be directed against his adversaries, vers. 20.

(m) *Plus tunc indulgentiæ erat, & plus licentiæ: tunc esus carnium prædicabatur, nunc abstinentia: tunc in omni vita jejuniorum pauciſſimi dies, nunc quasi unum jejunium Vita omnis tunc læsis ultimo suppetebat, nunc* self *pati-*

patientia: tunc irascentibus Lex ministra, nunc adversaria: tunc accusatori gladium porrigebat, nunc Charitatem: tunc etiam carnali illecebræ Lex indulgebat, nunc evangelium nec aspectui: tunc corporeæ voluptates habebant quandam licentiam, nunc jubentur etiam oculi custodire censuram: tunc ad multas Uxores recipiendas unius Mariti torum Lex dilatabat: nunc etiam ad unam excludendam casti affectus devotione constringit. Supereſt enim inquit Apoſtolus ut qui habent Uxores, &c. 1 Cor. 7. 29, 30, 31. ſays *Salvian* of the ſtrictneſs of the Chriſtian above the Jewiſh Law, *de avaritia, l. 2. p. 383. Ed. Oxon.* The reaſon whereof he adds, *p. 385. Majora ſolvimus, quia majora debemus. Judæi habebant rerum umbram, nos veritatem: Judæi fuerunt ſervi, nos adoptivi, &c.* And to the ſame purpoſe S. *Chryſoſtom*, Τὸ μὲν γὰρ παλαιὸν ἐπέσπων ἡμῖν ἀφέλειας πρόκειτο μέτρον, ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἀμύνασθαι τὴν ἀλήθειαν καὶ ἀνθιλοιδορεῖσθαι τῷ λοιδορουμένῳ, καὶ χρημάτων ὑπομελήσασθαι ἔξην, καὶ ἐνορκῶσθαι ὀμνύναι, καὶ ὀφθαλμὸν ἐξορύξαι ἀντὶ ὀφθαλμοῦ. καὶ μισῆσαι τὸν ἐχθρὸν, καὶ ὅτε τύφῃ, ὅτε ὀργίζεσθαι, ὅτε γυναῖκα τὴν μὲν ἐκβάλλειν, τὴν δὲ ἀνεισάγειν μεκώλυτο. καὶ ἐ τοῦτο μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ δύο καὶ γυναῖκας ἔχειν ὁ νόμος ἐπέτρεπε, καὶ πολλὴ, καὶ ἐν τούτοις, καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις ἄφεσιν ἡ συγκαλύβασις ἦν· καὶ ἡ τῆς χειρὸς παρρησία πολλῷ σεμνοτέρα γέγονεν ὁ δρόμος.* Chryſ. de Virgin. c. 44.

But as for us *Chriſtians* we muſt walk by a more perfect rule, and live up to a nobler pitch than ordinarily either *Jew* or *Gentile* did; or at the laſt day we ſhall be eternally condemned. For take even thoſe Sects among the *Jews*, which in the judgment of S. (*q*) *Paul* are the *ſtricteſt* of any in their *Religion*, viz. the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; and yet, as our Saviour himſelf has peremptorily and plainly affirmed, our Obedience muſt of neceſſity ſurpaſs theirs. *Except your righteouſneſs exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, you ſhall in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matt. 5. 20.

(*q*) Acts 26. 5.

In the accounts of our Religion we are guilty and puniſhable, when no other Law would take hold of us. For by the Goſpel of Chriſt, as we have ſeen, we ſhall be condemned, not only for *Adultery*, *Fornication* and *Whoredom*; but alſo for *Uncleanneſs*, for *Laſciviouſneſs*, nay;

nay, for *filthy jests* and *obscene discourses*. We are liable to die, not only for *drunkenness and revellings*, for *gluttony* and *surfeiting*; but also for *carnality*, *sensuality* and *voluptuousness*. There is enough against us to condemn us, although we do not *kill our Enemy*, if we *hate him*, or *rail at him*, nay, if we *refuse to do good to him*, to *speak well of him*, where we can do it truly and honestly, or to *pray for him*. We are strictly charged, not only that we should not *lye* and *slander*, but moreover that we should not so much as *revile*, or *reproach*, or *mock*, or *upbraid*, or *censure*, or *speak evil* of our Brother. We are severely threatned, not only if we *offer violence* to our Neighbour; but if we are *surly* towards him, if we are *hasty* and *fierce* with him, if we are *stately*, *uncondescensive* or *uncourteous* towards him. So far must we be from *fighting* and *blows*, from *seditions* and *tumults*; that under the highest penalties we must abstain, from *clamour* and *brawling*, from *debate* and *variance*, from *unquietness*, yea, from *pragmaticalness*, or *busying our selves in other mens matters*. We must keep back from *dishonour*, *irreverence*, and *speaking evil of Dignities*, whilst we submit to them; as well as from *disobedience* and *resistance* of our lawful Prince in open *rebellion*. To *exhort*, *depress*, or *circumvent our Brother in any matter*, is an Article of our Condemnation, as well as direct *theft*, and downright *robbery*. To *refuse the Cross*, to *scandalize a weak Brother*, to *envy our Neighbours praise*, and to be *vain-glorious*, *arrogant*, and forward upon all occasions to *boast* and set off our own; are all mortal sins in the accounts of our Law, and such as subject the impenitent Actors of them to eternal destruction.

These, and all the other instances set down in the foregoing Catalogues, which are too many to mention here, let us plainly see the height of that holiness, and the perfection of that love, which we are to live or die by. Our Law is the most perfect Rule, that ever the World heard of; and, as ever we hope for mercy and bliss, ours is to be the most perfect obedience. For as all these Laws, which under the pains of Death we are bound to obey, are most Heavenly and Divine; so is that a most perfect obedience, which is indispensably required to them. Which will more fully appear, by clearing up what I am to shew in the next Book, *Viz. What degrees and manner of Obedience is indispensably required to them.*

BOOK III.

What degrees and manner of Obedience is required to all the Laws forementioned.

CHAP. I.

Of Sincerity.

THE Qualifications which must render our Obedience acceptable to Almighty God, and make it avail us unto Life and Pardon at the last Day, are comprehended in these *two*;

1. Sincerity.
2. Integrity.

1. To render our Obedience to the foremention'd Laws of God acceptable, and available to our Salvation at the last Day; it is necessary that it be *sincere*.

* εἰλικρινὴς qu. ἕλη κεκόμενος, *that being true, and not counterfeit, doth not fear the light, but is willing to be tryed in the brightest Sun.*

Sincerity is a * *true and undissembled service of God*, opposite to *hypocrisie*, or a *false* and *feigned pretence of obeying him, when in reality we only serve our own selves.* And the Apostle joins these two ἐν ἁπλότητι καὶ εἰλικρινείᾳ, opposing *sincerity* to *fraud*, and a *double heart*, and making it the same with *simplicity*, 2 Cor. 1. 12. And again he joins it with *Truth*, *The unleavened Bread of sincerity and truth*, 1 Cor. 5. 8. And so *sincerus* by the Latin Grammarians is derived from ζὺν and κῆρ, as signifying the same with *cum corde*, *heartily* and *unfeignedly*.

For we must take notice that God has been so gracious to us in chusing out the instances of our Duty, as to *adopt*, for the most part, those particular *sorts* of *actions* into the matter of our *obedience*, which by the na-

natural Order and Constitution of Things make for our own present *Pleasure*, *Reputation*, or *Interest*. And every one of these, from the first and fundamental Principle of our Natures, *Self-love*, are sufficient inducement to us to practise them, although he had never laid his Commands upon us. So that although we have no kindness at all for God, nor would do any thing for his sake; yet shall we observe many things which he enjoyns us, not for *his pleasure* but our *own*. Thus for instance, may we be *chast* and *sober*, and practise all other Vertues which are gainful, not because we love God, but only because we *love Money*. We may be *just* and *honest*, and *seemingly religious*, not for the sake of a *Commandment*, but of our *own credit*, and because the contrary Practice would wound our good Name in the World, and stain our Reputation. And now when our own *lusts* and *vices*, our *carnal pleasures*, and *temporal advantages*, strike in after this manner with God's Laws, and command the same service which he enjoyns us; we may pretend, if we will, and as too oft we do, that all is for his sake, and that these performances, which are really owing to our own *self-interests*, come from us upon the account of *Religion* and *Obedience*. And when we falsifie and feign thus, it is flat Dissimulation. It is no more but *acting the part* of an obedient and religious Man, seeing, like an (*b*) *Actor* on the *Stage*, we are that Person whom we represent, not in *inward Truth* and *Reality*, but only in *Outward shew* and *Appearance*, which is the very Nature of *Hypocrisie*.

(*b*) ὑποκριτὴς is joined with δεᾶσθαι *Matt.* 6. 5. which is an intimation of its being taken from publick Plays and Theatres.

But for a Man to be *sincere* in God's Service, is the same as *really to intend that Obedience which he professes*. It is inwardly and truly to will and do that for his sake, which in outward Shew and Appearance we would be thought to do. It is nothing else, as the Psalmist says, but *truth in the inward parts*, Psal. 51. the having our inward Design and Intention, to agree with our outward Profession; and being verily and indeed those obedient Persons which we pretend to be.

And as for this Sincerity of our Performance of what God requires, *viz. our doing it for his sake, and because he commands it*; It is altogether necessary to make such *performance* become *obedience*, and to qualifie us for

the rewards of those that obey. For without it, we do not observe (c) God's Will, but our own; his Command had no share in what we did, because it had been done although he had said nothing; so that in our performance of it we served not him, but our own selves. And what has God to thank us for, if we do nothing but our own pleasure? Wherein do we serve him, by acting only according to our own liking? That cannot be charged on him, which is not designed for him; and if we do what he commands no otherwise than thus, it is all one as if we had done nothing.

(c) *Si pro arbitrio suo Servi Dominis obtemperant, nec in iis quidem, in quibus obtemperarint, obsequuntur. Quando enim Servus ex Domini jussis ea facit tantummodo quæ vult facere; jam non Dominicam implet voluntatem, sed suam.* Salvian. de Gub. Dei, l. 3. p. 79. Ed. Oxon.

But if ever we expect that God should judge us at the last Day to have obeyed him, we must be *sincere* in our obedient performances. For *the Lord looketh not on* (d) *outward appearance* and pretence, saith *Samuel, but he looks on the* inward intention and design, which is the *heart*, 1 Sam. 16. 7. *He saves*, as the Psalmist tells us, *the upright in heart*, Psal. 7. 10. And again, *As for the upright in heart, they*, and they alone, *shall glory*, Ps. 64. 10. For it is not from the bare outward appearance and profession, but *from the heart*, says *Solomon*, that the *issues of life* proceed, *Prov.* 4. 23. And this is plainly declared, in the expresses words of the Law it self. For it accepts not a heartless service, nor accounts it self *obeyed* by what was never *intended* for it. But thus it bespeaks us: *The Lord thy God requires thee to serve him, with all thy* (e) *heart, and with all thy soul. For he is a great God, a mighty and a terrible* to all who do otherwise, *and who* in his Judgment *regardeth not persons, nor*, to corrupt him, *taketh rewards*, Deut. 10. 12, 17. And the Apostle tells the *Philippians*, that their *being sincere*, is the way *to be without offence 'till the Day of Christ*, Phil. 1. 10.

(d) Rom. 2. 28, 29.

(e) Mat. 22. 36, 37, 38.

And thus we see, that to render our obedience acceptable at the last Day, it is absolutely necessary that it be sincere and unfeigned. We must do what God's Laws prescribe, not only because our own credit or interest sometimes requires it, but because God has commanded it. And in all our obedient performances, our heart and design must go along with him, before ever he will recompence and reward us.

So

So that 'tis plain, we cannot obey God, either against our will and intention, or without them; seeing our wills and intentions themselves, are the very Life and Soul of our Obedience. The Prime part of our Duty, consists in the directing of our Design. For even that which is done agreeable to God's Command, must be aimed and intended for him, or else it will never be owned and approved by him.

But that we may the better judge of this *sincerity* of our service, which is measured by our *Intention* and *Design*, we must take notice of a two-fold Intention. For it is either,

1. *Actual* and *Express*: Or,

2. *Habitual* and *Implicite*. Now it is this *latter*, which is always and indispensably required to the sincerity of our service; but as for the *former*, it is not always necessary, tho' oftentimes it be.

Intention, is the *tendency of the soul towards some end which it likes, and which it thinks to compass and endeavour after.* And this is one prime requisite in the actions of Men, and that which distinguisheth our Operations from the actions of brute Beasts; for what they do, proceeds from the necessary force of *uncontriving Nature* and *Instinct*; but what we, from *Reason* and *Design*.

And the cause of this difference is this; because God has given the *brute Beasts* no higher Guide and Commander of their Actions, than *appetite* and *passion*, whose Motions are not *chosen* with freedom, and raised in them by *reason* and *thought*; but merely by the *necessitating force of outward Objects* themselves, and by those impressions which they make upon them. For they act altogether through *Love* and *Hatred*, *Hopes* and *Fears*; and they *love* and *hate*, not through *Reason* and *Discourse*, but through the *natural* and *mechanical suitableness* or *offensiveness* of those Objects which they act for.

But as for us *Men*, he has put all our Actions under the Power, and in the Disposal, not of *outward things*, but of something within us, even our own *Free-will*. They are not imposed upon us by the force of any thing without us, but are freely chosen by us; we are not their Instruments, but their Authors; and they flow from our own Pleasure, and undetermined Choice.

Now as our actions are at the disposal, and command of our wills, so do our wills themselves command and dispose of them, not *blindly* and by *chance*, but always for some *reason*, and upon some *design*. For in *themselves* they are *indifferent*, to make us either *omit* or *act*, *neglect* or *exert* them. And therefore to determine our wills one way rather than the other, to act them rather than to let them alone; they must be moved and perswaded by such Arguments as are fit to win upon them. Now that which can move and gain upon our wills, is only *goodness*, or what we think tends some way or other to better and advantage us. For what we believe is *insignificant* and *useless* we *contemn*; and what is *hurtful* and *evil*, from the first Principle of our Natures, *self-love*, we straitway entertain with *hatred* and *avoidance*, but never with *love* and *good-will*. So that whensoever we will and chuse to act, rather than to sit still, it is always for some *end* which we propose to our selves, and by reason of some *good* or other which we expect to get by it: For no Man will be at pains for nothing, or labour without aiming at any recompence; but our Actions are as *means*, and there is always some *end* or other of them; something which we like, and which we think they tend to, that makes us imploy our Powers in the Production of them. And this *eying* or *aiming* at the *End* or *Motive*, whereunto we see our Action *tends*, and for the *sake whereof* we *set about it*, is our *Intention* of it.

Thus we see all our Actions agree in this, that they are chosen for the sake of some end, and are exerted upon some intention and design.

But in the *manner* of this Intention, there is some difference. For sometimes in acting, we actually and expresly think of that Good or End we are moved by, and look up and operate in direct order, and respect to it; which is an *actual* and *express intention*. But at other times, we do not look expresly further than the act it self: But having before fixed our selves upon the End, and upon this way of acting for it, our intention of the end, and our choice of the action are already determined, and we readily do the Act as we were wont, without ever expresly eying or designing of the end we are to serve by it. Our Wills now need nothing more to

make

make them command such action to be done, than to be offer'd the opportunity of doing it, and their *constant temper* and *inclination* is to close with it. So that when such particular action occurs, they need not *actually* to think of the end, to move them to chuse it; but are sufficiently inclined of themselves to do that through their *habitual tendency* and propension towards it. And this being no *express intuition*, and *particular designing* of the end which we act for, but only a *setled tendency* and *inclination* in the Soul after it, which through long *use* and *custom* is become its constant *temper* and *habitual*, it may be called an *habitual* or *implicit intention*.

Now both these sorts of intention have their place, as in all our *other Actions*, so particularly in those of *Vertue* and *Obedience*. For sometimes, our performances of those things which God requires, are *studied* and *deliberate*; we pause at them before we exert them, and think and perswade our selves into the production of them. And in regard the *great motive* or *end* of exerting them, (*viz.*) *God's command and injunction of them* is the *great Argument* to win us over to them, when we take time and ponder so, we act through a *particular* and *express intention*. But then at other times, we do what God enjoyns before we are aware; we need not deliberate about it, or argue our selves into the practice of it; but stand ready to perform it, as soon as opportunity is offered. And here the will being already inclined of it self to exert the action, because God has commanded it, it needs no arguments to move, nor any express intuition of the end to perswade it, but indeliberately chuses to obey, out of its own *habitual temper*, and *implicit intention*.

And as for the *cause* of this difference of our *Intention*, in doing those things which God commands; it is plainly the *different degrees and perfection of our Obedience*. For when our Vertue and Obedience are of *small strength*, and in an *imperfect degree*; there our *Lusts* have a considerable *Power* with us, as well as our *Religion*; and although they have not force enough eventually to hinder, yet they have so much as will suffice them to contend with, and oppose the doing of our duty: So that even when we do obey in *this state*, and close with God's command, it is by a *strife* and a

war, by *conflict* and *victory*. Now here our Wills are in doubt what way they shall determine their Choice, for they are canvassed and beset on both sides, both by *God* and by our own *Flesh*, or by our *Duty* and our *Appetites*. And to enable *Religion* to prevail with them in this Conflict above our *Passions*, there is a Necessity of representing all its Force, and of setting all its Motives before them, that thereby they may be induced to strike in with it, and to chuse what it commandeth. But now, as for the main *End and Motive* of all our *Religious Services*, it is *Gods having enjoyned and commanded them*. And when we trouble our selves to perform them, it is *for his sake*, that we may *endear our selves to him*. So that to enable us to chuse Obedience to God's Laws, rather than to our own Lusts, we must set him and his Command before us. And therefore all the Obedience which we perform here, is through a *particular* and *express Intention*.

But then at other Times, and in other Cases, our Vertue and Obedience is of full growth, and we are so accustomed to do what God requires, that we find no Reluctance or Opposition to it, but Use hath made it become, not so much our *considerate Choice*, as our *natural* and *indeliberate Performance*. Here we need not to consider and think our selves, into a Choice and Practice of that which is commanded: For our Natural Bent and habitual Tendency is towards it, and nothing more is wanting to our Performance of it, than our being shew'd it.

For *Custom*, as it is truly said, is a *second Nature*; and such things as have been long *used by us*, stick as close to us, and flow as *easily*, as *quickly*, as *indeliberately* and *naturally* from us, as those things that are *born with us*. They do not stay for our particular Contrivance and Designation of them, but run before it. For a Man by long Custom, shall have his Fingers move so fast upon a *Lute*, that Thought it self shall not be able to keep Time with them, and answer every stop with a particular Intention and Command thereof. And an *habitual Swearer*, when occasion is offered, or without any, will rap out Oaths when he is not aware; and so little many times was there of actual Contrivance and express Design in it, that when he hath done he doth not know it. And the Case is the same

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in other *habitual sinners*, whose transgressions, proceeding not so much from a particular and express choice, as from an habitual temper, and even natural inclination, are unconsidered, and indeliberate.

And therefore when our Obedience it self is become customary, and use has wrought it into our very Nature; we have no need upon every return of opportunity to eye God's command, which is the *end*, and to intend his service as a motive to our wills, to engage them to chuse the Action before us which tends to it. We stay not to bethink our selves, what it tends to, and who is to be served by it, and after that to intend expressly to serve him in it. For all these were done to our hands before the time of obeying came; so that now, when we have the opportunity, we do not busie our selves in exciting them, but in this habitual state of things, and perfection of Obedience act ordinarily in the force of them, which is obeying through an *habitual* and *implicit intention*.

And now from what has been said of this *Perfection and customarinesss of our Obedience*, being the cause of our obeying only through an *habitual intention*; it plainly appears, that not the *actual*, but *habitual intention* of serving God, is that which is *always* and *indispensably* required to a *sincere* service of him.

Indeed when we *pause*, and *deliberate*, and take several things into our *consideration*; a *particular intention* of his service, is necessary to make what we do upon such deliberation, an *acceptable Obedience*. For if in the deliberation our choice was doubtful as to the *event*, whether we should do the Act or not, such particularity of intention was necessary, to make us chuse the *Action* of Obedience. And if it were doubtful as to the *motive*, whether we should do it for God's sake, when other things *sufficient* to make us act as we did (as the service of our *Lusts* or *Interests*) concurr'd to it as well as *God's Command*; then is it necessary to make us chuse the *acceptable service* of Obedience.

But for that intention, I say, which is not only here in *this* case, or some *others*, but *universally*, and in *all*, indispensably necessary to the *sincerity* of our Obedience, it is an *habitual intention*. For the very reason, why we do intend his *service particularly*

ticularly and *expreſly*, but only *habitually* and *implicitly*, is becauſe our obedience has arriv'd to good perfection, and long uſe and cuſtom has made it, not ſo much at every turn our conſiderate choice and contrivance, as our very Nature, and unſtudied Inclination. Now this exaltation of *Obedience* into a natural *Temper*, is ſo far from rendring it *unſincere*, and making God look upon it as none at all, that in very deed it is the height and perfection of that which his Goſpel commands us to aſpire and aim at. For there our Duty is expreſſed, by our *being* (f) *born again*, by our becoming (g) *New Men*, (h) and *New Creatures*, and by our being made (i) *partakers of the Divine Nature*, and ſo like unto God himſelf, who is carried on to all actions of *Vertue* and *Holineſs*, not by the motives of Reaſon and Argument, but by the exact and infinite goodneſs of his own Nature it ſelf.

(f) John 3. 3.
(g) Ephes. 4. 24. Coloſ. 3. 10.
(h) Gal. 6. 15. 2 Cor. 5. 17.
(i) 2 Pet. 1. 4. Matt. 5. 48.

So that in meaſuring the ſincerity of our Obedience, by the reality of our intention and deſign for God's ſervice, we ſee that we are not always to exact of our ſelves a particular and expreſs intention, becauſe God requires it not; but may, and often muſt, when our Obedience becomes natural and habitual, take up with an intention that is ſo too.

But for the fuller underſtanding of this condition of our Obedience, viz. *Sincerity*, we muſt conſider, not only the *reality* and *undiſſembledneſs* of our ſervice and intention, which have been diſcourſed of hitherto, but their *uncorruptneſs* and *unmixedneſs* likewiſe. And this, as well as the former, is ſometimes ſignified by ſincerity, which is uſed to denote, not *truth* only and *reality*, in oppoſition to *Fiction* and *Hypocriſie*; but (k) *Purity* alſo, in oppoſition to *mixture* and *alloy*. And thus we read of the *ſincere milk of the Word*, (*i. e.*) the pure and unmix'd parts of it, or the Chriſtian Doctrine as freed from all adulterate mixtures of *Gnoſtick Impurities*, and *Jewiſh Obſervances*, which were thoſe falſe Ingredients wherewith in the Apoſtles times ſo many went about to corrupt the the Word of God, 1. *Pet.* 2. 2.

(k) Thus *ſincerum mel*, is honey without any mixture of wax in it; and *ſincerum* is explain'd by the Grammarians to ſignify the ſame as *ſine cera*.

So that to ſerve God *ſincerely* in this ſenſe, is to perform what he commands us *for his ſake*, and with a *deſign to pleaſe him*, without mixing therewith any *by-ends* of our own, or *intending* our own *ſelf-intereſts* together with him.

But

But this we are to understand with much restriction. For it is not all intention of *Pleasure*, *Profit*, or other *Interest to our selves*, in the performance of God's commands, which he hath forbidden us. We may design to advantage our selves by our Obedience, and be sincere still; provided that this design be only upon those *spiritual* and *eternal advantages which God himself promises* to the Obedient; or upon *temporal ones* so far as they *minister* to Obedience, and are *subordinate* under it. But that *mixture of intention* only is *corrupt* and *unsincere*, when, together with our intention of *serving God*, we join another intention of *serving sin*; or when we design some *temporal ends*, as *much*, or *more* than we do *God's service*, which makes our *self-interest*, instead of being *subservient* to Obedience, to become fit to *oppose* and *undermine* it.

First, I say, *God has not forbidden us all intention of our own advantage, in the performance of his holy Commandments.* When he requires us to obey him, he doth not prohibit all Love of our own selves, and regard to our own self-interest; which will appear from all these Reasons, both because *some eye at our own good*, and respect to our own advantage, is of that *nature, that it cannot be forbidden us*; because *God's Laws themselves have offered, and proposed it to us*; because *the necessity of our faith to our obedience, shews plainly, that it cannot be denied us*; and because *the best men that ever were, have not been able to obey without it, and yet their obedience has been most graciously accepted.*

First, Some respect to our own good, and intention to advantage our selves by our obedience, is of *that nature, that it cannot be forbidden us.* It cannot fall under a Law, or be a matter of a Commandment, because it can never be performed.

As for any *one particular* advantage, and self-interest indeed, we may deny our selves in it, and therefore any Law may very well require it. For we have many particular self-interests to serve, and they clash and interfere among themselves: and so long as we are in pursuit of any one, by virtue of it we are able to restrain and deny our selves in any other. And thus *all men* daily deny their *Ease* for their *Interest*, and their *Gain* for their *Liberty*, and their *Liberty* for their *Lives*.

And

And *all good* Men daily over-rule that Love which they have for their *Bodies*, by that higher and ſtronger love which they have for their *Souls*; and deny themſeves in any *Temporal* Intereſts, to ſecure their *Eternal*. And becauſe all men have this power of denying their own Self-love in ſmall inſtances, to ſerve it in greater, and of parting with any goods and advantages of this world, to purchaſe to themſelves incomparably better in the next; God has enacted the *denial of our ſelves, in all ſuch particular intereſts as hinder our Obedience*, into a Religious Duty, and made it univerſally obliging to all the world.

But as for the caſting off this *love of our ſelves*, and *reſpect to our own advantage*, not only as to ſome *particular* intereſts, whilſt our eye is upon others, but as to *all* Self intereſts *whatſoever*; this in the matter of *Duty* and *Obedience*, no *man* can *perform*, and therefore no *Law* can *command* it. For in that conſtitution of Nature, which God has given us, *ſelf-love* is the *firſt* and *over-ruling Principle*. It has a ſhare *almoſt in all our actions*, and influences *all our faculties*; ſo that in all that variety of operations which flow from us, there are very few wherein we have no eye at our own advantage.

In ſome actions, 'tis true, we are influenced chiefly, and *almoſt* wholly, by our *love of others*, which is a *noble* and a *generous Principle*. For there are ſeveral good Offices which we daily do to others, in doing whereof we no way prejudice our ſelves; and theſe our *love of others* make us perform, and our own *ſelf-love* doth not withſtand it; which is ſeen in all the Offices of *humanity* and *common courteſie*. And other things again there are wherein we advantage them, though it be conſiderably to our own trouble, and our own hindrance; and here, although our own *ſelf-love oppoſe* it ſelf, yet our *love of them prevails* and *over-rules* it; as is daily ſhewn, in the Offices of *Chriſtian Charity*, and *particular friendſhip*. In theſe Caſes, our *love of others* and *of our ſelves*, are *ſeparate*; our *kindneſs for them* ſhews it ſelf in ſuch things, wherein our *own ſelf-love* is either *not concerned at all*, or wherein it is *oppoſed* and *overpoured*: ſo that here we are *not influenced* and *governed* by it.

And if this were the *Caſe* in all our *obedient actions*, there might be more pretence for *performing* them *purely* out

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of *love to God* without mixing therewith any *love of our own selves.*

But in *them* quite contrary, our *love of God*, and *of our selves*, are neither *repugnant*, nor so much as *separate*; but *most closely conjoined.* For God hath made the same things, the matter both of our *Duty*, and of our *Interest*; so that in *serving him*, we do in the highest measure *serve our selves* too. And in this Case, where our own *self-love* is so *much concerned*, and has not the *love of God* to *oppose* and *over-rule* it, but to *jump* in and *conspire* with it; it is not possible, but that we shall be *influenced*, and *acted* by it. For it *naturally* issues out upon our *own good*, and here it has an *object* in the *highest advancement*, and there is nothing to *hinder* or *restrain* it. So that whatsoever we may do through a *bare abstracted love of others* without any *regard to our own selves*, in *those Cases*, where our own *self-love* and it are *separate* or *repugnant*: yet in the *matter of obedience*, where they are so *closely conjoined* as God's service is, and is known by us to be so infinitely our own interest; 'tis plain that we cannot perfectly abstract our minds from it, or be wholly free from Regarding.

And since no man can wholly abstain from intending his own advantage in God's service, no Law can require it. It is no fit matter of a prohibition, nor capable of being retrenched by a Commandment; being it is at no man's choice whether or no he shall observe it. So that God must work a Change in his own Creation, and form us into something different from what we are, before he can in reason demand it of us.

2. Some respect to our own advantage, in performing what God commands, is lawful and allowable in us; because *God's Laws themselves do authorize, and propose it to us.*

God has not required us to serve him for nothing, but has offer'd us an abundant recompence for all our labour; and added such allurements to his Laws, as infinitely surpass all the difficulties of our Duty. He has proposed every thing to us, that may any way work upon our self-love, and care for our own advantage; whether it be the *promises of good* to intice, or the *threats of evil* to affright us into obedience.

For

For thus saith our Law, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that keepeth my sayings,* or Commands, *shall never see death,* John. 8. 51. *To my Sheep* that *follow me, and hear* or obey *my voice, I will give eternal life,* John 10. 27, 28. *Blessed are they that do his Commandments, for they shall have right to the Tree of Life, and enter in through the Gate into the City,* Rev. 22. 14. But on the other side, *The Wrath of God cometh upon the Children of disobedience,* Col. 3. 6. For at the day of Judgment, *when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with the* Guards and Attendance of his *mighty Angels;* then will he *in flaming fire take vengeance on them that obey not the Gospel, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.* 2 Thess. 1. 7, 8, 9.

Thus have we in Christ's Laws, to omit other things, a promise made to us of Heaven and endless joys, to induce us to obedience; and a threatning of Hell and eternal misery denounced to us, to make us afraid to disobey. And these make our obedience to become infinitely our greatest self-interest, and render it impossible for us not to serve our own advantage in the highest measure, if we do obey at all.

And since God's Laws themselves propose such incomparable Arguments to perswade us to obedience; they can never forbid us to have an eye to them, or to be excited to obedience by them. For the very end why God annexes such allurements to his Commands, is, that they may be a *motive* to win our choice, and make us *willing* to obey them. But now our wills are moved by nothing, further than they desire it, and intend to purchase it. For we must always design the end before we chuse the means, since it is only for the sake and hopes of that, that the trouble of these is undertaken. So that if any thing must be the final cause and encouragement of our endeavour, it must be the matter of our intention and design also. And therefore seeing God himself has placed such infinite advantages and self-interests at the end of our Duty, to perswade and excite us to a willing performance of it, 'tis evident he designs first of all, that we should have an eye to them in obeying, because otherwise it is not possible that we should be moved by them.

Nay,

Nay, so far is God from forbidding all respect to our own advantage, in our obedient performances of his Laws; that,

3. In asserting, so clearly as he has done, the necessity of faith to our obedience, he plainly tells us, that if we must *obey* at all, it cannot *be denied us.*

Faith, is a most necessary Principle, of all *natural*, as well as *Gospel service.* For *without faith*, saith S. *Paul*, *it is impossible* for any Man, whether he be Heathen or Christian, *to please God*; because *he that cometh to God*; in whatsoever Religion, *must believe* thus much of him at least, *that he is, and* also *that he is a rewarder of* all *them that seek him*, without an Eye whereat no Man would ever be perswaded to seek after him, *Heb.* 11. 6. And as for the *belief of the Gospel* in particular, which is the *faith* of us *Christians*; so necessary is it to make us obey the Laws of Christ, that our *obedience*, as being effected by it, is called the *obedience of faith*, Rom. 16. 26. and *disobedient Men*, in the Scripture language are ordinarily stiled *unbelievers*; and *disobedience*, *unbelief.*

But now what is there in our faith so indispensably necessary to effect this obedience, but our belief, as S. *Paul* says, of *God's readiness to reward us*, and of those *advantageous promises*, which the Gospel proposes to us upon our performance of it? And how it is possible for our belief of them to carry us on to obey, further than we concern our selves, for those things which are promised, and intend by such Obedience to procure them? The Gospel indeed has furnished us with all manner of *Motives* if we will *believe* it, without which it is not *possible* that we should be moved by it. It tells us of a most *surpassing love* and infinite kindness, which God and Christ have shewn to us; and if we believe this, it is fit to raise in us a most exalted *love* which will make us *perform* any thing *for their sakes* out of very *gratitude.* Now this is a most *noble* and *ingenuous Principle* of obedience, which although it have *something*, has yet the *least* of *self-love* in it. But it is *weak* and *insufficient*, unable of *it self* to carry far, and to bear us through our whole Duty. And therefore besides it, for a perfect supply of all our wants, we have therein moreover the *greatest good* things, and such as we

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are moſt in love with, *promiſed* to our obedience; and the greateſt evils, ſuch as we moſt fear, *threatned* if we diſobey. And if we believe *theſe*, we muſt take obedience to be our *higheſt*, not *ſervice* only, but *ſelf-intereſt*; and that no *temptation* can either *promiſe* or *threaten* ſo much to our own *ſelf-love*, as God doth. And this indeed carries us through all, and makes us obey intirely. It overcomes every difficulty, and over-ballances all contrary inticements. But this it doth not only ſo *far* as we *intend to purchaſe* all thoſe *ſurpaſſing advantages* by our *obedience*, which infinitely exceed all thoſe *other enticements* that are attained by Men who *diſobey*.

And as this reſpect to our own advantage in our obedient performances, is nothing more than the condition of our Nature abſolutely requires, than the neceſſity of Faith ſuppoſes, and than God's Law it ſelf offers and propoſes to us; ſo neither is it any thing more,

4. Than the beſt Men have always uſed, who yet were graciouſly accepted upon ſuch obedience. For juſt *Noah* obeyed God's Law through the *fear* of that deſtruction which it threatned, and with a *deſign* of eſcaping it himſelf when all the wicked of the World ſhould be overwhelmed in it. *Noah*, ſaith the Text, *was moved with fear to the preparing of his Ark*, as God had commanded, *and to the ſaving of his houſe* thereby. And for that very reaſon, becauſe he *believed God's threatning*, and was *effectually afraid of it*, he is in that very place called an *Heir of the Righteouſneſs which is by faith*, Heb. 11. 7. The obedience of *Moſes* is aſcribed in plain words, to his *deſign* upon thoſe *rewards* which God hath *promiſed*, and which he hoped to compaſs by it. For *he had reſpect*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *to the recompence of reward*, Heb. 11. 26. And to put it beyond all doubt, that this *reſpect to our own advantage* in our performance of God's Laws, is not only the *neceſſity* of *ſome* Men, but as I ſaid before, the very *frame* and *conſtitution* of the *humane nature*: we are told, that it was found in it in the *higheſt advancement*, which it either ever *did*, or poſſibly *can* receive; I mean in our Saviour *Chriſt* himſelf. For even of *his obedience*, and of the higheſt inſtance of it, *his death* it ſelf, the Apoſtle aſſures us, that it was performed through a deſign upon *his own advantage*, as well as upon

on *that Glory* which would thereby *redound to God.* It was, says he, *for the* sake of the *joy that was set before him*, that he *endured the Cross, and despised the shame* of it, *Heb.* 12. 2.

Thus, upon all these accounts it appears, that *the having respect to our own advantage in our obedience to God's Laws*, is not only an *innocent*, but an *absolutely necessary* thing. God can never be offended with it, because the *necessity of our nature requires it*, because *his own Laws propose it*, because *our faith is made effectual by it, and* lastly, *because the best men that ever lived, have stood in need of it, and obeyed through it.*

And since some respect to our own good, and intention of our own advantage in God's Service, is so plainly lawful; that surely must be such, where the good things, which we intend for our selves, are only those spiritual and eternal advantages, which his *own Law* has *promised to the obedient*, or other *temporal* ones, so far as they *minister* to *obedience*, and are *subordinate* under it.

For the *spiritual* and *eternal advantages*, which we are to reap by our obedience, they are *the forgiveness of our Sins*, the *peace of Conscience*, the *assistance of the Spirit*, and the *joys of Heaven*; together with deliverance from all the contrary evils, of *Guilt* and *Hell.* And these, God himself has *expressly promised* to us upon our obedience, to *perswade* us into a performance of it. he uses them as Arguments to gain our *Choice*, which they must do by actuating our *intention*; and annexes them to our obedience for this end, that we may be won to perform it for *their sakes*, when we should not barely for *its own.* So that it must needs be *lawful* for every man to *intend* these in God's Service, because God himself has *proposed* them *expressly* in his Laws to every man's *intention.*

And as for the temporal advantages which accrue to us from God's Service, they are *length of Days*, and *health of Body*, and *riches*, and *honour*, or good *reputation*; with such a freedom from all the opposite *evils*, of *sickness*, and *death*, and *shame*, and *poverty*, as suits with our own Good, and our Condition in this World.

And these also are *promised* to the *obedient. Let thine heart keep my Commandments*, saith *Wisdom*; *for length*

of days, and long life, and peace shall they add unto thee, Prov. 3. 1, 2. And as *length of days is in her right hand,* so *in her left are riches and honour,* ver. 16. *The memory of the just shall be blessed,* when *the name of the wicked shall rot,* Prov. 10. 7. *There* neither *is,* nor shall be *any want to them that fear the Lord.* For though *the Lions,* that seem best able to get it, and are most careless how they come by it, *do lack and suffer hunger;* yet *they that seek the Lord, shall not want any good thing,* Psal. 34. 9, 10.

But if there were no express promises of these temporal advantages proposed to us upon our obedience, in *God's Word;* yet were it enough to warrant our intention of them, that God has annexed them to it, in the very *order of Things,* and *course of Nature.* For, according to the ordinary course and constitution of the World, *Sobriety, Justice, Peaceableness, Diligence,* and other instances of Virtue and Obedience, are naturally fitted to bring down all these temporal advantages upon us. And this Course of Nature, and Order of Things, is of God's establishment. It is as much his appointment as the promises and revelations of his Gospel are. For he is the Author of the *World* as well as of the *Bible.* He made the Frame and Order of it to be what now it is, and after he had formed it, *he saw that all was very good,* Gen. 1. 31. His *Word* and *Works* are both his own, and the *advantages* of Virtue and Obedience in the *one,* are as much of *his appointment* as in the *other.*

So that as for our *temporal advantages* also, which are much improved and ministred to by our obedience, they are such as God has given us, for *motives* and *encouragements* in his service. He has set before us things *present* as well as *future,* to quicken us in our performances of his Commandments, and has appointed us to intend both, because otherwise it is not possible that we should be quickened, and excited by them.

But the only thing, which we are to take care of in this matter, is, that as these *temporal advantages* are *established by God,* whether in the *course of Nature,* or in the *express revelations of his Word,* as *motives* and *inducements* to our *Obedience:* So we use them accordingly, as *helps* and *instruments* to enable us to *Obey.*

We

We must make them *assistant* and *subservient* to those *Laws*, which they are annexed to; they are to *minister* to them, but by no means to *exalt* themselves *above* them, or to make *against* them. But if once they *lose* this *serviceableness*, and *subordination* to the *doing* of God's Will, they *lose all* that can *warrant* them, and all the place which he has assign'd for them, and make our *performance* of God's Commands, to be *no Obedience* to him, nor to give right to any recompence or *reward* from him. For, as I said then,

Secondly, our *intention of our own advantage* in God's service is *forbidden*, and renders our *obedient performances corrupt* and *unsincere*; when, *together with our intention of serving God, we join another intention of serving sin*; or when we *design* some *temporal ends*, as *much*, or *more*, than we *design God's Service*, which makes our *self-interest*, instead of being *subservient* to obedience, to become fit to *oppose* and *undermine it*.

Sometimes, I say, *together with their intention of serving God, men join another intention of serving sin.* And this is done in these and the like cases: *(viz.)* If a man *prosecutes a malefactor*, which is an action agreeable to the command of Justice, out of the sinful end of *spite* and *revenge*, as well as out of a purpose of *Obedience*. If a *Priest* shall *take Confessions* from Women, with a design of *Lust* as well as of *Religion*. If a man shall be *temperate* and *sober*, *chast* and *industrious*, out of a principle of *covetousness*, as much as out of *duty*. If he do, as our Saviour tells us the Pharisees did, *make long Prayers*, and other *professions of Religion*, to enable him the better and without suspicion, to *devour widows houses*, as well as to *serve God*. In *these* instances, and in all *others* that are *like* unto them, there is a Mixture of *light* and *darkness*, of *good* and *evil design*. Men join *God* with *Belial*, and *Obedience* with something of a quite *contrary nature*, *intending* at once to serve both their *Lord* and their *Sins* too.

But as for their performances, which flow from such a *mixture of design* as this, they will in no wise be owned as an *obedient*, but punished as a sinful service. For that *evil motive*, which is mixed with the *good*, is such as God has *expressly threatned*. He has plainly declared, that he will condemn men eternally, for *Revenge*, for *Lust*,

for *Covetousness* and *Rapine*, and for all those *actions* which proceed from them. So that as for such *performances*, as arise from such *sinful principles*, they are *judged* already, and the dreadful sentence is long ago gone out against them.

And then as for their *mixing* this *damnable design of Sin*, with a *design of obedience* to God in the same action; so far is that from *lessening*, that it is rather an *aggravation* of their *crime*. For it adds to all that *evil*, which it contains within it self, a *prophanation* also of what is *holy*, or an *abuse* of what is *sacred*; and together with the *service of the Sin*, joins an *immediate* and *direct affront of God* too.

At other times, I say, men *design* some *temporal ends* for themselves, as *much*, or *more*, than they *design God's service*. And this also renders their performances *unsincere*, and qualifies their own *temporal self-interests* instead of being *subservient* to *obedience*, to *oppose* and *undermine* it.

Their *temporal advantages*, they intend sometimes as *much*, as they do *God's service*. They make them equal and co-ordinate, loving the world, as much as they love God; and they are induced to perform what he commands them, as much for its sake, as they are for his.

Now this is an indignity, which God will by no means endure. For it is plainly an *intolerable degradation* of him, and a bringing him down to nothing more than *equal amiableness*, with those *earthly pleasures*, and *temporal interests*, which we join in *co-ordination* with him. It is a setting up the world for his rival, and making the Creature equal in our estimation to him, who is the Creator and Lord of all. But the peremptory words of his Law are,---*Thou shalt have no other Gods before me*, or in my presence, *Exod.* 20. 3. He will be served and respected *above* all; and to bring other things into competition with him, he looks upon to be the same thing, as to renounce him. For *he* is *jealous* of the *preheminence* of *his service* above all *other things*, as a *Husband* is of his *Wife's love to him* above all other Men; *I the Lord*, saith he, *am a jealous God*, Exod. 20. 5.

And

And since *this intending of our temporal Advantages equally to God's Service*, is look'd upon to be so *great* an *Affront* and *Degradation* of him; the making them *superior* to him, and being won *more* for *their sakes*, than for *his*, must do so much rather. For this is a setting up other things *above* him, and is like *making* and *serving* of *another God*. Upon which account, as *some* expound it, *Covetousness*, which is a *loving and serving of Riches more than God*, is called *Idolatry*. Col. 3. 5.

And when any *Temporal Interest* of our own, has got as *great* Power over us, or *greater*, than *God* himself has; as it makes *for* the performance of his Command at *one* time, so will it at *another* be as ready to make *against* it. For although our *Duty* and our temporal *Interest*, do *ordinarily strike in* together; yet they do not always do so, but are *sometimes divided*. And then this Hank, which our own worldly Advantage has got over us, will not determine us for God, but contest with him. It will make us neglect his Service, that we may serve our selves; and carry us on to transgress his Commands, whensoever we may thereby promote our own worldly Interests.

So that the intending to *serve our Sins*, together with our intending to *serve God*; or the Intention of our *own temporal Interest*, in a *degree*, either *equal*, or *superior* to our Intention of *Obedience* to him, by both which ways, all *worldly advantages* are qualified to *oppose* him: This *Mixture of Intention*, I say, makes our *Performance of his Commands* to be no sincere or *acceptable Obedience*, which he either should or will Recompence.

As for that *unmixedness of Intention* therefore, which is implied in *Sincerity*, and which is *necessary to the acceptance of our Obedience* of all the forementioned Laws, it excludes not *all Intention* of our *own Advantage* together with *God's Service*. For to have respect to the *spiritual* and *eternal Advantages*, which in God's *Laws* themselves are expressly *promised* to our *Obedience*, is *always lawful*: And to have an eye upon those *temporal advantages*, which will accrue to us by obeying, is *lawful so far*, as we intend them, not in a *degree*, either *equal* to *God's service*, or *superior* to it, by both which ways they are *empower'd* to *undermine* it. But then only our *mixing a design of our own self-interest*, together with our *Design of serving God*, makes our service *unsincere*, and cuts

off our Hopes of Reward for the same, when, together with our *Design of serving God, we join a Design of serving Sin*; or when we *design some temporal Ends of our own*, as *much*, or *more*, than we *design Obedience* unto him.

And therefore it is a vain Fear, wherewith many good People are wont to perplex their Souls, when they *doubt* of the *Sincerity of their Obedience*, because it was perform'd with an *Eye at their own Advantage*; through *their Fears of Hell*, or *their Hopes of Heaven*. For whatsoever some, out of a *mistaken Zeal* for *God's Honour*, may have said to the contrary, this is not only *innocent*, but, as I have shewn, plainly *necessary*. If they scruple at this, they must scruple eternally. For it is not their *Choice*, but their very *Nature* to act *thus*, and they cannot help it. This, I say, is their very *Nature*, and they must *leave off* to be *men*, before they can *get quit* of it. Men may *speak loftily*, and talk of obeying *purely for God's sake*, without seeking any thing at all for *themselves*. But this is *mere Talk*, and *empty Vaunt*, that can never come *beyond Words*, or *appear in Action*. For they must be made something else than what they are, before they can *practise* it.

If any man doubts then, whether God will accept his Obedience, because in obeying he had an Eye at his own self-interest; he doubts whether God will accept him, because he obeys as a Man. *Noah*, and *Abraham*, and *Moses*, nay *Christ* himself might have doubted at this rate; for in their Obedience, they all intended their own Good as well as *God's Glory*, and had *respect unto* the *Recompence of Reward*. If this be a *sufficient Ground of Scruple*, every *Christian* Man must of *necessity scruple without end*. For all our *Obedience*, is an Obedience of *Faith*; and our Faith or *Belief* of *Heaven* and *Hell*, makes us *chuse* to obey, in making us first to *intend* by such Obedience to *obtain* the *one*, and *escape* the *other*. So that either our *own Nature*, and *Christ's Gospel*, must be *changed* into something different from what they are; or we must acknowledge, that such *honest Intention* of our own Good, as I have mentioned, is *lawful* for us in *God's service*, since it is made so *necessary* and *unavoidable* for us in the *one*, and so much *encouraged* by the *other*.

And thus at last we see, what is the first requisite to an acceptable Obedience, *viz. Sincerity*. And that it implies,

plies, both the *reality* of our Intention in God's Service, or our performing it truly for God's sake, as we pretend to do; and also the *uncorruptness* of it, or our performing it for his sake more than for any thing else whatsoever, and without regard to any other Advantages of our own, than such as are allowed by him, and are subordinate under him.

But in regard the *Degrees* of our *Intention* and *Design*, are not so *obvious* and easily discoverable in themselves, but are better known to us in their *Fruits* and *Effects*, than in their *own Natures*: For the greater ease in judging, whether we do intend God's Service *most* of all, and so are *sincere in our Obedience*, or no, I shall, before I conclude this Point, lay down a *plain* and *certain* Mark, whence any Man of common Apprehension may easily discern the same.

And the Rule, which I shall lay down for it, is this; *If our Obedience be intire it cannot but be sincere likewise.* For he who obeys God in *all Times*, and in *all Instances*, cannot but serve him with both these *Ingredients* of Sincerity, *viz. Truth* and *Preheminence*. He must needs *intend* God's Service *really* and *above all*; who *intends* it so, as to *serve* him *constantly*, and *universally*. And the Reason is this, because although our *temporal Interest*, and present Advantage, be for *the most part* united with God's Service, yet it is not so always: But *sometimes in all Instances* of Obedience, and at most times in *some*, it is *separated* and *divided* from it. So that as long as we are true to our own Principle of Acting, which we may safely conclude we always are, if we either design not God's Service at all through *Hypocrisie*, or design it not above all through a *corrupt mixture of Intention*; at *those times*, when these Instances happen, we shall not be acted by the *Command*, but through the *love* of our *own temporal Interest*, which we intend *really*, and design *more*, we shall certainly *act against* it. For our *Actions* go where our *Wills* lead them; and our *Wills* always follow that, which is the *prevailing Motive* to them, and has most Power with them. And therefore if we still chuse *God's Service* in *all* its *parts*, and in *all Times*, whether it make *for* our *present Advantage*, or *against* it; we may be assured that we *intend* his Service *truly*, and also that we *intend* it *most*; since we *serve him*, when no *By-interest* of our

own *can* be ſerved, and *diſſerve* all *other Intereſts* for *his ſake*. He muſt needs be our *higheſt Aim*, becauſe, where we may *pleaſe* him, though no *ſecular Advantages* concur, we chuſe *any thing*; and where he would be *offended*, though *all other advantages* invite, we chuſe *nothing*.

So that in the Matter of *Obedience*, our *Integrity* is the *great* and *laſt Meaſure* of our *Acceptance*. And if upon Examination we find, that our Obedience is *intire*, we need not doubt but that it is *ſincere* alſo.

And this is the very *Mark*, from which according to that Verſion of the Pſalms which is uſed in our Liturgy, the Pſalmiſt himſelf concludes concerning the Obedience of the *Iſraelites*. For he collects it to have been a *diſſembled* and *unſincere*, becauſe it was not a *whole* and *intire* Service. *They did but flatter him with their Mouth*, ſaith he, *and diſſembled with him in their tongue; for their heart was not whole* or entire *with him*, Pſal. 78. 36, 37.

To clear up this enquiry then, *What Qualifications of our Obedience* to all the forementioned Laws of God, *muſt render it acceptable to him, and available to our ſalvation at the laſt day*, I ſhall proceed to diſcourſe of the *ſecond* Condition of all *acceptable Obedience*, viz. *Integrity*; of which in the *next* Chapter.

CHAP. II.

Of the Second Qualification of all acceptable Obedience, viz. *Integrity*.

Integrity of Obedience, is *ſuch a perfection and compleatneſs of it, as excludes all maimedneſs and defects*, which is well intimated by S. *James*, when he explains *intire* by *wanting nothing*; *Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and intire*, which you will be by *wanting nothing*, Jam. 1. 4.

And this, in another Word, is ordinarily expreſſed in Scripture by *uprightneſs*. For in the moſt common Metaphor of the Holy Books, our *Courſe of Life*, is called our *Way*; our *Actions*, *Steps*; and our *Doing*, *Walking*. And to carry on the Metaphor, our *Courſe of Obedience* is

is called our *right* or *streight Path*; our *Course of sin and transgressions*, a *crooked Path*; our *committing sin*, *stumbling* and *falling*; and our *doing our duty*, *walking uprightly*. So that for a Man to be *upright in God's ways*, is not to *stumble*, *or fall by Sin and Disobedience*; *i. e.* to be *perfect* and *intire*, or *wanting nothing in our obedient Performances*.

Now this *Integrity* or *Uprightness*, which is necessary to our *Obedience*, that it may stand us in stead at the last Day, is *three-fold*.

1. An Integrity of our *Powers* or *Faculties*, which I call an *Integrity* of the *Subject*.

2. An Integrity of *Seasons* and *Opportunities*, which is an *Integrity* of *Time*.

3. An Integrity of the *particular Laws of Duty*, and Instances of Obedience, which is an *Integrity* of the *Object*.

And all these are necessary, to render our Performance of God's Laws an acceptable Service. For if ever we expect, that he should reward our Obedience at the last Day, we must take care before-hand, that it be the Obedience of our *whole Man*, in *all Times*, to the *whole Law* of God. To begin with it.

1. That our Obedience of the foremention'd Laws may avail us to Life and Pardon at the last Day, we must take care to obey with *all our Powers* and *Faculties*, which is an *Integrity* of the *Subject*. And for this, the very Letter of the Law is express. For when the Lawyer asks, *What shall I do to inherit eternal life?* Christ sends him to what is written in the Law, and repeats that to him for an Answer; *Thou shalt love* (and *serve*, as it is *Deut.* 11. 13.) *the Lord thy God, with all thy heart*, or will, Mark 12. *and with all thy soul*, or affections, *and with all thy strength*, 30. or executive and bodily powers, *and with all thy mind*, or understanding, *Luke* 10. 25, 26, 27, 28. Obedience with all these Powers and with our whole Nature, is the means of Life, and the indispensible Condition of our eternal Happiness.

First, We must keep all Gods Commandments, with our *Minds* or *Understandings*. It is a dangerous Conceit for any man to phansie, that he may be as *sinful* as he will in his *thoughts*, so long as he only *loves and chuses*, projects and contrives for the forbidden instance

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in his *mind*, but doth not proceed so far, as to obey it in his *outward Practice*. For at the last Day we must be called to account, and justified or condemned, by the *Counsels* and *Imaginations* of our *Minds*, as well as by the *Works* of our *Lives*. For not only the Works and Practice, but also *the thoughts of the wicked*, or of Wickedness, *are an abomination to the Lord*, Proverbs 15. 26. *The thought of foolishness is sin*, Prov. 24. 9. And since *God forbids* and *hates* them; as ever we hope for his Favour, we must *repent* of them, and *forsake* them. *Let the wicked man forsake his thoughts*, saith the Prophet, *and turn them* from his Sin *unto the Lord*; *and* then *he will have mercy* upon him, *and abundantly pardon* him, *Isai.* 55. 7. For the *warfare* that God has set us, after which we are to attain the Reward of eternal Happiness, *is a casting down imaginations*, as the Apostle tells us, *and bringing into Captivity every* rebellious *thought to the obedience of Christ*. 2. Cor. 10. 4, 5.

In particular, this Obedience of our *Minds* to the Law of God must be, as a doing what he enjoins, so likewise a keeping off from every thing which he forbids.

First, In our *Imaginations*. We must not *phansie* it in our Minds with Love and Delight, nor indulge to any Thoughts of it with such Pleasure, as may be a Bait to our Choice, and weaken our Aversation and Hatred of it, and thereby ensnare us in the Practice thereof. *Our warfare*, as we have heard from the Apostle, must not be against *actions* only, but against *Imaginations* also, and *insnaring Phansies* of Evil; *casting down* rebellious *Imaginations, and making every thought obedient to* the Laws of *Christ*, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. And in the *old World*, when *the imaginations of mens thoughts were always evil, it repented the Lord that he had made Man*, insomuch as he resolved to destroy him, *Gen.* 6. 5, 6, 7.

Secondly, In our *Counsels* and *Contrivances*. We must not study what *Means* are *fittest*, what *Times* are *best*, and what *manner* is *most advantageous*, for the acting of our Sins. For if we cast about in our Thoughts, and consult about the most commodious way of committing any Sin; although all our Designs be defeated before we come to any effect, yet shall we be condemn'd for our *Contrivance*, as well as we should for the *compleat Action*. And this

this our Lord himself has plainly determined in *one* instance, and the Case is the same in all the *rest*. For of the *contrivances* and *machinations of murther* he assures us, That they, as well as *murther it self* are of the number of those things which *pollute* a man, and so utterly unfit him for Heaven, where nothing can enter that is *polluted* or *unclean*. *Out of the heart*, saith he, *proceed evil thoughts* or (*a*) murtherous machinations, and besides them, compleat *murthers*, *adulteries*, &c. and *these defile the man*, Matt. 15. 19.

(*a*) διαλογισμοι πονηροι, Which being set immediately before φόνοι, and the sins here being reckoned up according to the order of the Ten Commandments, may seem to determine the wicked machinations to this particular, *viz. murtherous* only.

And as for that *particular* sort of contriving for sin, which is the height and perfection of Villany; *viz. the inventing of new*, and before *unknown ways of transgressing*: It is sure to meet with a more severe punishment than others, and to thrust men down deeper into the Abyss of Hell. Of this sort, are all *inventions of new Oaths*, *new Nick-names*, *or Evil-speakings*, *new frauds* and *methods of cozenage*, *new incentives of lust*, *new modes of drinking*, *and arts of intemperance*. But of *these*, and of all others which are like unto them, God will one day exact a most rigorous and terrible account: For *he that deviseth to do evil*, saith *Solomon*, although he himself doth not *act*, but only *devise* it, *he shall be called* and dealt with as a *mischievous* and wicked *person*, Prov. 24. 8. And S. *Paul* tells us expressly, that in the *judgment of God*, *inventors of evil things* shall be declared *worthy of death*, Rom. 1. 30, 32.

As for our *minds* or *understandings* then, they are one faculty, which is plainly implied in the *Integrity* of our service, and without the obedience whereof, at the last day God will not accept us.

And another faculty implied in it likewise is,

Secondly, Our *Soul* or *Affections*. It is a vain thing, for any man to love and set his heart upon any particular sin, and yet for all that to expect that God should love and reward him. *If I regard iniquity in my heart*, saith the Psalmist, *the Lord will not hear me*, Psal. 66. 18. *No man*, as our Saviour says, *can serve two masters; for if he love the one*, for his sake, when their interests interfere,

fere, *he will hate the other*; so that *we cannot serve God*, if with our affections we continue to *serve sin*, Mat. 6. 24. To pretend obedience to God, and yet to love what he forbids; to make a show of his service, and yet in our very hearts to hanker after his vilest Enemies, whom above all things his Soul abhors; this surely is not *honestly* to *serve* him, but *grosly* to *collogue*, and *flatly to dissemble* with him. For in very deed, if any man love sin, he sides with God's enemy; but for the service and *fear of the Lord, it is to hate evil*, Prov. 8. 13.

If ever we expect that God should accept even our good works, we must offer up our affections with them. For if our hearts go along with our lusts, whilst our practice is against them, we serve God only against our wills; we submit to him, as a *Slave* doth to a *tyrannous* Lord, not through any kindness for him, but through a hateful fear of him. We utterly dislike what he bids us, but yet we do it, only because we dare not do otherwise. But now this is such a way of performing obedience, as God will never endure to accept of. For he scorns to be served by a slavish fear, and an unwilling mind; he will never look upon a heartless sacrifice; but it is the affection wherewith we do it, which makes him set a price upon any thing that we do, and our love that he regards, more than our performance. For this is that very thing, which was thought fit to be mentioned in the Command it self, *Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind*, Mat. 22. 37.

'Tis true indeed, we do not find our *affection* so *quick* and *sensible* for *God* and *his Laws*, as it uses to be for the *things of the world*; neither can we reasonably expect it should. For our affections are *bodily powers*, and it is their very nature, as *Philosophy* instructs us, to be a *vehement sensation upon some certain commotions of our bodily spirits*; so that *God* and *his Laws*, which are things *immaterial* and *insensible*, are no *proper* and *proportionate object* for them. For it is only *matter*, that is able of it self to *affect matter*; and *material* and *sensible objects* which can excite our *material* and *sensitive passions* and *appetites*. *One* bodily faculty, is no more fit in its own nature to be moved by a spiritual object, than *another* is; and we may as well expect, that our *eyes* should see,

see, or our *fingers handle it*; as that our *affections* should of *themselves* issue out upon it, either to *love*, or *desire*, or *delight* in it.

So that considering things barely in *themselves*, I say, and the *natural agreeableness* that is betwixt them, which is the ground of their *natural operations*; it is only *bodily pain* or *pleasure*, that is *of it self* fit to move our *bodily passions*. But as for *spiritual* and *insensible objects*, such as *God* and *Vertue* are, whatever fitness to work upon our *affections* they may have upon *other* accounts, yet in themselves they have *none*. *Vertue* and *Obedience*, which are *spiritual* things may gain upon our *wills* and *understandings*; which are *spiritual* and *rational faculties*; but upon our *bodily appetites* and *affections*, for their own sakes *barely* they never can.

But that which makes our affections to issue out upon *God* and *Vertue*; is not the spiritual nature of *God* and *Vertue* themselves; but those *sensible* and *bodily* things, which *flow* from them, and are *annexed* to them. For although *God* be *immaterial* in *himself*, yet infinite are those *material* and *bodily delights*, which we receive from him. And although *Vertue* and *Obedience* are in their own natures *spiritual* and *insensible*, yet exceeding great, and exceeding many, are the *sensible goods* and pleasures, which are *annexed* to them. For *Heaven*, and *eternal life*, which are *promised* to our *obedience*, will give a *full delight*, not only to our *souls* and *spirits*, but even to *all* our *senses* likewise. It will endlesly entertain our *eyes*, with most *splendid sights* and *glorious objects*; it will feast our *ears*, with *melodious songs*, and *most ravishing hallelujahs*; and refresh our *whole bodies*, with a most *exalted*, and *everlasting ease* and *pleasure*. As on the other side, *hell*, and *eternal misery*, which are the *established punishment* of all *sin* and *disobedience*, will bring, not only upon our *spirits*, but upon our *bodies* too, as full a scene of most *exquisite pain* and *sorrow*. For so violent and intolerable will the torments of our bodies there be, that God could find nothing too high to set them out by, but has expressed them by one of the most raging and tormenting things in nature, *eternal fire*.

Now as for *Heaven* and *Hell*, they indeed are such things, as can of *themselves* stir our *affections* and *bodily passions*

paſſions with a witneſs. When they are ſet before us, they are able to make us *love God* and our *Duty* above all things elſe, and to *hate* nothing ſo much as *Sin* and *Diſobedience*. For no *Sin* can promiſe us ſo much *bodily delight*, as is to be enjoyed in *Heaven*; neither can *Obedience* in any *poſſible* inſtance expoſe us to ſo great *bodily pains*, as the damn'd for ever undergo in *Hell*. So that when once *Heaven* and *Hell* are *propoſed* to our *affections*, and act upon them, they will prevail with them more than any thing elſe can, and make nothing ſo *dear* to them as the *performance of their duty*, nor any thing ſo *hateful* as the *tranſgreſſion* of it.

And thus may *God* and *Vertue* become a fit object even of our *bodily paſſions*, and a moſt *cogent* matter of *love*, *deſire*, and *joy*; as, on the contrary, *ſin* and *wickedneſs* are, of *ſorrow*, *ſlight* and *hatred*. They are moſt powerful to excite all theſe *affections*, although not in their *bare ſpiritual ſelves*, yet in their *bodily dependants*, and *annexed conſequences*. For the *greateſt bodily joys* ſhall one day crown our *Obedience*, and the *acuteſt bodily torments* will certainly befall us if we *diſobey*. And theſe, although as yet they are at a *diſtance*, and *future* to us, are moſt fit to work upon us, and moſt ſtrongly to affect us. For we are Creatures endowed with underſtanding, and have Reaſon given to us to ſet future things before us, and to think our ſelves into paſſions and affections, and not to be *idle* and altogether *paſſive*, like the brute and unreaſonable Creatures, and ſuffer the bare force of *outward* and *preſent* objects to excite them in us. So that with our *bodily affections*, we may *love* and *delight* in *God* and *Religion*, which are *ſpiritual* things, becauſe of their *bodily joys* and *attendences*; and *ſenſibly hate* and *grieve* at our ſins and diſobedience, which are *moral* and *immaterial* evils, becauſe of their *ſenſible* pains and puniſhment. And we may *love* the *one*, and *hate* the *other*, *above* all things elſe; becauſe no *bodily joys* are in any the leaſt compariſon *ſo* great, as thoſe which are laid up for the *good* in *Heaven*, nor any *bodily* pains *ſo* tormenting, as thoſe which are prepar'd for the damn'd in *Hell*. And ſince God has given to our *bodily affections*, even in their *own way*, the *greateſt motives* to *love him above all*, and *above* all things to *hate ſin*, it is the higheſt Reaſon that he ſhould require it of us, and demand the *preeminent ſervice*,

vice, not only of our *spirits*, but also of our *lower soul* or *affections* also.

But although our *bodily affections*, when they are employed about *Vice* and *Vertue*, which are *spiritual* things, by reason of this *supereminence* of *sensitive* rewards in the *one*, and punishments in the *other*, be more *strong* and *powerful*; yet are they not, as I said, so *warm* and sensible as they use to be, when they issue out upon *sensible* and *bodily objects*. We *feel one* in our own souls, and are affected in them, much more violently, than we are in the *other*. And that it must needs be so, is plain. For our affections for *worldly* things, are raised in us by the *things themselves*, and by those impressions which they make upon us; and they act to the *highest*, and according to the *utmost* of their power. But our *affections* for *spiritual* things, are to be raised in us by our own *Reason*, and we are to argue and think our selves up to them; and our thoughts are *free*, and go no further than we please to suffer them. And indeed we find so much difficulty in fixing them upon any thing, and there are so many other things obtruding daily upon them, to divert and call them off from these, that we seldom stay so long upon them, or are so well acquainted with them, as to be wrought up into a very *warm* and *inflamed* affection for them.

Besides what is the chief Reason of all, that *good* and *evil* in *worldly* things, which *affects* us is *present* with us; and therefore our passions *for* or *against* them, are raised in us by our *sense* and *feeling*. But as for *spiritual* things, and those *bodily* joys and sorrows which are *annexed* to them, for the *sake* whereof we are *sensibly affected* with them, they are not present with us, but future and at a distance; and therefore our passion for them cannot be raised by our *sense*, whose objects are only *present* things, but merely by our *fancy* and *imagination*. But now, as for the *sensible warmth* and voilence of a *passion*, it is nothing near so *quick*, when it is excited by *fancy*, as when it is produced by *sense*. For no man is so *feelingly affected* with *hearing* a sad Story, as he would be by *seeing* of it. And a Man will be moved abundantly less, by *imagining* a *battle*, a *murder*, or any other dreadful thing, than by *beholding* it. And the reason is, because the impressions upon our *sense* are *quick*

and

and *violent*, and their *warmth* is communicated to our *affections* which are raised by them: whereas our *imaginations* are *calm* and *faint* in comparison, and the *passions* which flow from them partake of their *temper*, and are more *cold* and less *perceptible*. So that our passions for *worldly* things being passions upon *sense*, and our passions for things *spiritual* with their *bodily* pain or pleasure annexed, being only upon *fancy* and *imagination*; we must needs be more *warmly* and *sensibly*, although not more powerfully, affected with the things of *this* world, than of the *other*.

But that which is to distinguish our *passion for God and Vertue above* all things else, from our passion for *worldly* things, is not the *warmth* and *sensibleness*, but the *power* and *continuance* of it. For it must be a *prevalent* affection, which doth more service, although it make less noise; which gets the *upper hand* in *competition*, and make us when we must *despise* one, to disregard all things else, and to adhere to God's service, what other things soever be lost by it. What it wants in *warmth*, it has in *permanency* and *power*; in sticks faster to us, and can do more with us, than our love of any thing besides. For in our affections, we must needs *prefer God* and *his service before* every other thing when they stand in competition; or we have none of that *Love with the whole soul*, which the Commandment requires of us; as will be shewn more fully * afterwards.

* Chap. 8.

And because our *thoughts* and *affections* have in them a great latitude, and in a matter of so high concern, every good soul will be inquisitive after some determinate accounts of that *compass* and *degree* of them, which is necessary to our acceptance: Before I conclude this Point, I will set down what measures of obedience in these two faculties, what *thoughts* and *imaginations* of our *minds*, and what *degrees* of *love* and *delight* in our *affections*, shall be judged sufficient at the last Day, to *save* or to *destroy* us.

As for our *thoughts*, there is one more *elaborate* and *perfect* sort of them, *viz.* our *counsels* and *contrivances*. And when they are employed about the compassing of forbidden things, they are our *sin*, as I shew'd before, and without *repentance*, will certainly prove our *condemnation*:

And

And as for other of our thoughts, which are not come up to the height of a *contrivance* or *consultations*, but are only *simple* apprehensions; some of them also are *properly* and *directly good*, or *evil*, and an *article* of our *life* or *death*. God has imposed several Laws, which he has backed both with threats and promises, upon our very thoughts themselves, of which sort there are some to be met with under all the three *general* Parts of Duty, *viz.* to *God*, our *Neighbour*, and our *selves*. For our thoughts of *God*, are bound up by the Law of *honour*, which forbids us to lessen or prophane him by *dishonourable Notions* and *Opinions*; our thoughts of our *Neighbour*, by the Laws of *Charity* and *Candour*, which suffer us not either to reproach or injure him by *undervaluing Ideas*, or *groundless Suspicions*; and our thoughts of our own *selves*, by the Law of *humility*, which prohibits us to be exalted in our own conceits, through *false* and *over-high apprehensions* of our *own excellence*. *Pious* and *Reverend thoughts* of *God*, and *charitable opinions* of *Men*, and *humble* and *lowly conceits* of our *own selves*, are Duties incumbent upon our very *Minds* themselves. And all the *opposite* vices of *impious* and *reproachful Ideas of God*; of *censorious*, *suspicious*, and *lessening thoughts of other Men*; and of *proud* and *arrogant conceits of our own worth*; are transgressions within the sphere and compass even of our *understandings*. For the exercise of the *first*, is not only a *cause* and *principle*, but a *part* and *instance* also of *obedience*, and an *article* of *life*; as the exercise of the other, is an instance of *disobedience*, and an *article* also of *damnation*.

So that as for all our *perfected* and *studied thoughts of evil*, viz. our *counsels* and *contrivances*; and as for all *such simple thoughts* and *meer apprehensions*, as have *particular Laws* imposed upon them, they are not only *principles*, but *parts* and *instances* of *disobedience*; and if we are *guilty* of them, unless we retract them by *repentance*, we shall be liable to be *condemned* for them.

But then there are several other *bare imaginations* and *simple apprehensions*, which are not under any of these particular Laws, that are imposed upon our thoughts themselves, but are employed upon things commanded or forbidden by any of the other Laws forementioned. And as for all these apprehensions, in them-

ſelves they are neither *Sin* nor *Duty*, nor a matter either of *reward* or *puniſhment*; but ſo far only, as they are *cauſes* and *principles*, either of a *ſinful* or *obedient choice* or *practice* of thoſe good or evil things, which they are employed upon.

In *themſelves*, I ſay, theſe *meer apprehenſions* are neither *Sin* nor *Duty*. We may *perceive* ſin in our *Minds*, and have it in a thought or notion, without ever being guilty of it, or liable to anſwer for it. For the *Sun ſhines* upon a *Dunghill* without being *Defiled* by it; and *God ſees* all the *wickedneſs* in *Hell*, but is not *tainted* with it. And ſo long as we ſojourn in a world of *Iniquity*, every good Man muſt needs know, and behold all the vices of the Earth; but bare underſtanding of them, doth not make him partake with them, or ſubject to be puniſhed for them.

But to make theſe *meer apprehenſions* and *imaginations*, either of *good* or *evil*, an inſtance of *obedience* or *diſobedience*; they muſt be * *cauſes* and *principles* of an *obedient*, or *diſobedient choice* or *practice*. For our *inward thoughts* and *imaginations*, are *Springs* and *Principles*, both of our *inward choice*, and alſo of our *outward operations*. And the ſervice which God requires of them, is the ſervice of the *Principle*. He demands the obedience of our *Minds*, as a *means*, and in order to a further obedience of our hearts and actions. And expects that we ſhould think ſo *long*, and ſo *often*, upon the *abſoluteneſs* of his *authority*, the *kindneſs* of his *nature*, the *reaſonableneſs* of his *commands*, the *glory* of his *rewards*, and the *terror* of his *puniſhments*; till in our hearts we chuſe thoſe things which he has commanded, and *perform* them in our *works* and *practice*. And when *Apprehenſion* or *Knowledge* carries us on to *performance*, it is an acceptable ſervice, but no otherwiſe. For *hereby alone*, ſaith S. *John*, *we know that we know him*, with ſuch knowledge as ſhall be accepted by him, *if we keep his Commandments*, 1 John 2. 3. And on the other ſide, our bare *imaginations* and *apprehenſions* of ſome *forbidden Sin*, are then only *diſobedient*, when they carry us on to *chuſe* or *practiſe* thoſe things that are *ſinful*. And we muſt go on from *thought*, to *choice*, or *practice*, before the *vices thought* of become our own, and our *apprehenſions* of ſin become themſelves *ſinful*. For the *thoughts of Sin*, have the

* See this ſtated, *Lib.* 5. *Chap.* 4.

ſinful-

sinfulness of *means* and *causes*; and are sinful so *far*, as they help on either our *consent*, or *performance*. So our Saviour has determined in *one* instance, *viz.* that of *lustful looks* and *apprehensions*, Matt. 5. *He that looks upon a woman* so long as *to lust after her*, or to consent in his heart to the enjoyment of her, *he hath committed Adultery with her already in his heart*, v. 28.

And then, as for our *affections*. their measures are the very same with those already mentioned, of our *bare imaginations*, and *simple apprehensions*. For their *service* and *obedience*, is that of the *principle*, and their Sentence shall be according to those *effects*, either in our *wills* or *practice* which flow from it.

If we *love* and *desire obedience*, so far as to *chuse* and *act* it; this *degree* of *affection* will gain us God's *love* and *favour*, and secure his *rewards*; but less than it, no other shall. *He that keeps my Commandments*, saith Christ, *he it is that loveth me, and they* only *who* so *love me* in obeying me, *shall be loved again of my Father, and I will love them*, John 14. 15, 21.

But if our love and desire of evil things, carry us on to * *chuse* or *act* any instance of *disobedience*, for the sake of that which is *loved* and *desired*; then are our *affections sinful*, and such as will *destroy* us, The *desire* of *evil*, is not so truly the *state* of *mortal sin*, as of *dangerous temptation*; it is not *deadly* in it self, but *kills* by *carrying* us on, to a *sinful* and *deadly choice* and *actions*. For when once it has got to that *degree*, it is *obnoxious* to a *dreadful sentence*. Whereof the Psalmist gives us one instance, in the *love of violence*. *Him that loveth violence, the soul of the Lord hateth*, Psalm 11. 5. And S. *John* says the same of the *love of lying*, and the Case is *alike* in every other sin. *Without*, in outer darkness, *are murtherers*, and *whatsoever loveth or maketh a lye*, Rev. 22. 15.

* See this stated, Book 5. Chap. 4.

And thus we see what *measure* of *obedience* is required in these *two* faculties, and what *kinds* and *degrees*, of *thoughts* and *affections* are to be *used* or *restrained*, to make *theirs* an *acceptable service*. For we must *abstain* from all *evil counsels* and *contrivances*; from all *simple apprehensions*, which are *particularly forbidden*, and put in *use* all such as are *particularly enjoined*. And as for all other our *bare thoughts* and *imaginations*, and all our

affections and *desires*, we must *fix* them upon our *Duty* so long, till they make us *perform* it; and never suffer them to issue out upon *evil* so far, till they carry us on, either to *chuse*, or to *practise* it; and till they have carried us to do one of these, they are imperfect things, and not truly grown up to the perfect stature, either of Obedience, or of Disobedience.

But besides these *two* faculties, *viz.* our *minds* and *affections*, there is yet another, whose service is necessary to render ours an acceptable obedience; and that is,

Thirdly, Our *hearts or wills* also.

It is an absurd Dream, for any man to think of serving God without his *will*, because without that, none of his actions can be called his own. For that only is imputed to us, which is chosen by us, and which it was in the power of our own Wills, either to promote, or hinder; no man *deserving praise*, or being *liable to answer* for what he could not help. But of all things, *God* most of all regards our hearts in all our performances. He perfectly *discerns* them, and he *estimates* our *services* according to them. So that it is not possible for any of us to obey him *against our wills*, in regard the choice of our *will* and *heart* it self, is that which renders any action a *saving* and *acceptable obedience*. For *out of the heart*, as *Solomon* saith, *proceed the issues of life*, Prov. 4. 23.

The *choice* then, as well as the *practice* of our *Duty*, is plainly necessary, to render it *available* to our *salvation*. But on the other side, if we *chuse sin*, although we miss of opportunity to act it, the bare *choice*, without the *practice* is *sufficient* to our *condemnation*. For even by *that*, when we proceed no *further*, our *heart* has gone *astray* from God, and we are *polluted* by the sin which we resolve upon in our own choice, since *out of the heart*, as our Saviour tells us, *proceeds the pollution of the Man*, Matth. 15. 16, 20. We may *commit* all sorts of transgressions, and *incurr* the punishment of them, meerly by *consenting* to them inwardly in our *hearts*, without ever compleating them in our *outward operation*. For our Lord himself has thus determined it in one instance, and the Case is the same in all the rest. *Whosoever looks upon a Woman to lust after her*, or so long till his heart consent to commit lewdness with her if he could, *he*, though

though he never met with an (e) opportunity to act it, or before any, *hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*, Matth. 5. 28.

(e) *Cum ab homine mala res sola necessitate non agitur, ipsa rei turpis cupiditas pro actione damnatur*, Salvian. de Prov. l. 6. p. 205. Ed. Oxon.

No Man then may venture to *will* and *chuse* any *one Sin*, and yet presume he is *innocent*. For if *Fear*, or *Shame*, or *Interest*, or other *by-motive* and *worldly End*, or *want of Opportunity*, hinder him from the *outward acting* and *compleating* of his *Sin*; yet if his *Heart* stands for it, and all the while he *wills* and *chuses* it, he is *guilty* in the Accounts of God, as if he had *committed* it. We disobey, in *willing* as well as in *doing*; and shall suffer for a wicked *Choice*, as well as for a wicked *Practice*. So that as ever we hope, to have our *Obedience* to the forementioned Laws avail us unto *Life* and *Pardon* at the last Day, we must take care to perform it, as with our *Minds* and *Affections*, so with our *Hearts* or *Wills* likewise.

As for these *three* Faculties therefore, *viz.* our *Minds*, our *Wills*, and our *Affections*; they must necessarily be devoted to God's Service, to make up an *intire* Obedience. As ever we hope for *Heaven*, we must employ our Minds upon *God* and his *Laws*, so far at least, till we *love* them in our *Souls*, and *chuse* them in our *Hearts*, with full Purpose and Resolution of performing them. Our *Understandings* must consider of our *Duty*, and of the *Motives* to Obedience, so *long*, and so *well*, till our *Affections* are inflamed with a desire of it, and our *Wills* are firmly resolved upon it. And as ever we expect to escape the Torments of *Hell*, we must take care that we entertain no *Thoughts* or *Desires* of any *Sin* so long, till in our *Hearts* we become *concerned* for it, and *willing* to fulfil it. But if we look on it, it must be in order to *loath* and *disdain* it. We must consider how *disingenuous*, how *shameful*, and how *mischievous* a thing it is; and indulge to no Apprehensions of it in our *Minds*, which are like to insnare, either our *Choice*, or *Practice*; nor *dwell upon* any, but those that are apt to kindle our *Indignation* and *Zeal* against it, and arm our *Wills* with full *Purpose* to overcome it.

This must be the Use and Exercise, of all our inward *Powers*, and *Principles* of Action, They must be used as Instruments of *good Life*, and made the great *Springs*, and *productive* Causes of all vertuous *Practice* and *Obedience*. It is this *holy* and *obedient Practice* that is the *End*, whereto all these *obedient Thoughts*, *Desires* and *Resolutions*, are directed; so that if they fall short of this they miss of their chief effect, and appear to be *weak* and *idle* things, that are *insignificant* and *useless*.

CHAP. III.

Of Obedience with the Fourth Faculty, viz. our Executive or Bodily Powers, and outward Operations.

A *Fourth* Faculty, that is indispensibly necessary to the *Integrity* of our Obedience, and which is the chief *End* and *Perfection*, and gets Acceptance for all the rest is our *Strength*, or *bodily* and *executive Powers*.

For the completion and crown of all, we must *do*, as well as *think* and *desire*; and our obedient *choice*, must end in an obedient *practice*. For all our *inward* Motions, are in order to *outward* Operations; they must go on to good Effects, before they are fit for the great Reward: and we must *work* as well as *desire*; and not only *will*, but *do* our *Duty*, because upon nothing less than that we shall be accepted at the last Day.

This, indeed, is the *severe* Service, and the *distasteful* part of Duty. It is a Matter of much *Labour* and *Pains*, of much *Strife* and *Contention*. For *the doing of our Duty*, is the *top of all*; every Hindrance must be removed, and every Difficulty overcome, before we can attain to it. Our *Scruples* and *gainsaying Reasonings*, must be *silenced*; our *discouraging Fears*, quieted; and all our *repugnant Desires cooled*, or *conquered*: Every *Doubt* of our *Minds* must be *solved*, and every *hostile Lust subdued*, e'er we can *act* what we are *required*. A *secret Wish*, or a *sudden Desire* of Obedience, may start up in our Souls

Souls *unawares*, and there is not much opposition made to it, because our Lusts receive no great Hurt from it. For the Pleasure of our Lusts, lies in acting and fulfilling them; and they are secure of their own Delights, so long as they are of our Practice. And therefore they will allow us to *think* of *Good*, to spend a *faint Wish*, a *sudden Inclination*, or a *fruitless Desire* upon it. But if once we would go on to *do* our *Duty*, and to *work Obedience*, then begins the Conflict. Our Lusts then bestir themselves with *Might* and *Main*, and set every *Faculty* a-work to *Resist* and *Defeat* it. For our *Thoughts* begin to *argue*, and to *pick Quarrels* with our *Duty*. They suggest all its *Difficulties* and *Dangers*. They represent all the *Pains* of the Undertaking, to *cool* our *Love*; the *appendant Dangers*, to *raise* our *Fears*; and the *great Hazards*, to *shake* our *Hopes*, and make us *despair* of *Success*. For the sake of our *Sins*, we *arm* all *discouraging Passions*, and quite *stifle* all the *obedient Suggestions* of our *Consciences*. For either we *soften* our *Sin* by *Excuses*, or *Justifie* it by *Argument*, or *over-look* it by *Ignorance*, *heedless Inconsideration* and *Forgetfulness*. Either we will act it *rashly*, through the Power of a strong Lust, and not *consider* it at all; or else *think* of it, only to *lessen* or *defend* it. And when, by the Opposition of our *Lusts* to the perfecting and performing of our *Duty*, our *spiritual Strengths* are thus *weakened*, and our *Lusts advanced*, when our *Passions rise*, and our *Minds plead* against it; then is the *Strife*, and *there's* the *Toil* and *Difficulty* of *Obedience*.

And because in this *Obedience of our* Works *and* Actions, there is so much *Difficulty*, therefore are most People so desirous to *shift* it off, and so forward to take up with any thing, which will *save* them the *Labour* of it. They perswade themselves, that God will admit of easier *Terms*, and build their *Hopes* upon *cheaper Services*; in particular upon these *Four*:

First, A *true Belief*, or *orthodox Opinions*.

Secondly, An *Obedience of idle Desires* and *ineffective Wishes*.

And if for all these, they continue still to *do* what *God forbids*, and to *work* Disobedience; then their Hope is to be saved notwithstanding it, because,

Thirdly, Their *falling is* through the Power of a *great* and *overpowering Temptation*, which they *see* and *resist*, but *cannot prevail over*. So that,

Fourthly, Their *Transgression* is with *Reluctance* and *Unwillingness*, their *Service of Sin* is an *unwilling*, and a *slavish Service*.

1. The *first* false Ground, whereby Men elude all the Necessity of serving God with their *Strength* or *executive Powers*, in *outward Works* and *Operations*, is their Confidence of being saved, for a *true Belief*, or a *right Knowledge in Religious Matters* and *Orthodox Opinions*. They turn all *Religion* into a matter of *Study* and *Speculation*, as if it required only a *good Head*, and a *discerning Judgment*. They make it a matter of *Skill*, but not of *Practice*; an *Exercise* of *Wit* and *Parts*, but not a *Rule* of *Action*. For the *Faith* which they expect should *save* them, with some Men goes no farther than the *Mind*, and consists barely in *right Notions* and *Apprehensions*. They take it to be nothing more, but an *Understanding what Christ has said*, a being able to *reason upon it*, and to *argue for it*, and in their own *Minds*, *approving* and *consenting* to it: And that not to all that Christ has revealed neither. For the *Precepts* or *Commands*, it *overlooks*, and doth not meddle with; the *Threatnings*, it either considers not at all, or if it do, it makes them not to be due to that whereunto God has fixed them, (*viz.*) *Disobedience of Practice*, but only to *Ignorance* and *Unbelief*. But all that which their Faith *eyes*, and which their Minds *solely*, or at least *principally* approve of, is the *historical Passages* of *Christ's Life and Death*, the *doctrinal Points* which he has told us *concerning God* or *himself*, and the *comfortable Promises* of the *Gospel*. They believe what *Christ* is, what he has done and suffered for us, and what he has promised to us. They *think right* in all the *Religious Controversies* that are on foot in the World, *joining* themselves with the *orthodox Men*, and *siding*, as they presume, with the true Opinion; they *profess Christ's Religion*, and are *Members* of his *Church*, and *adhere* to the *Right Party* of *Christians*, and to the *purest Congregation*, and that they conclude is enough to bring them to *Heaven*.

But if any think, as God be praised, many do, that God requires more than the bare Service of our *Minds*

and

and *right Apprehensions*; yet even a great part of them fansie, that all which he requires besides, is only the *Obedience* of their *Tongues* and *Discourses*. If they *believe* with the *Mind*, and *confess* with the *Mouth*, although they are *rebellious* and *reprobate in their Practice*, they are *satisfied* of their *Godly Estate*, and presume that God is so too. Their Religion is made up of *Lip-service*, for they think to content God by *heavenly Talk*, and *pious Conference*, by larding all their Discourses with the *Name of God*, and *Shreds of Scripture*; all their *Conversation* is *holy Phrase* and *sanctified Form* of speaking; and this they hope will atone for all the *Lewdness* and *Disobedience* of their *Lives* and *Actions*.

And if they proceed yet further to a *Faith* that reacheth beyond the *Mind* and the *Tongue*, and think it necessary that it sink down from the *Head* into the *Heart*; yet there they will allow God to expect no great Matters. They hope he will be well pleased, although it summons not up all our *Affections* for his Service, if it produce in us these *two easie* Passions, which are raised without much ado, and may well be spared, (*viz.*) a *strong Confidence*, and a *warm Zeal*. If, to make it *saving*, it must imply a joint Concurrence of our *Affections*, it shall be only of these *two*. It shall add *Hope* to *Knowledge*, and be a *Belief that God will save Sinners*, with a *special Hope*, and *fanciful Confidence*, that he will in *particular* save them: It shall add *Zeal* to *Orthodoxy*, a *warm Heart* to a *sound Head*, and be no more, but a *maintaining* of, and *stickling for right Opinions*, and *against erroneous* and *false* ones, with *Heat* and *Fierceness*.

Thus do Men delude themselves, into great Confidences, and vain Expectations, from a *Faith* that is *without Fruit*, from an *orthodox*, but *empty Knowledge*, which is void of all *obedient Practice*.

But a *Knowledge* and *Belief*, which is not more *comprehensive* in its *Nature*, nor has other *Effects* than these; they will find to their Cost in the Event of things, is *miserable*, *delusive* and *vain*. It will serve to no other end, but the *heightning* of their *Crimes*, and the *encreasing* of their *Condemnation*. For do but consider:

If we will *believe* and *understand* Christ's *Doctrines* and his *Promises*, but *overlook*, or *deny* his *Laws* and

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Precepts; what is this, but instead of *Honour* and *Service*, to *affront* and *renounce* him? For by picking and chusing at this rate, we cast off his Power of Molding for us a Religion, and fixing the Terms of his own Mercy, and make to our selves a Condition of our own Salvation. We follow him so far only, as we please our selves, but no farther. And the compass of our Belief it self, is not bounded by his Authority, or measured according to *his* Mind, but *our own*. For we understand and assent, not to every thing that *he* has *said*, but only to what *we* our selves *like*. We refuse to take every thing upon his Word, and credit him in what he speaks, no longer than it agrees with us, or than we matter not whether what he says be true or no; but we either give no heed to him, or flatly disbelieve him, where we have any Temptation. So that his *Veracity* and *Truth* it self, has no Power over our very *Minds*, beyond what our own *Lusts*, and *beloved Sins* will *suffer* it: But the *Devil* and the *World* must be served in the *first* Place by our *Opinions*, and *God* must be forced to take up with their Leavings.

Nay, what is yet more, by such a *partial* and *squeamish Belief* as this, we do not only give or take, at our *own liking*, from that Attribute of his, which in *believing* we would be thought to honour, *viz.* his *Truth*: But even where we seem to submit to it, we *wrong* and *pervert* it. For we *wrest* his *Sense*, and *spoil* his *Meaning*, and *undermine* all that he *intends*: So that even that which we do believe, is not *his* Mind, but our *own*. For the true Meaning of his *Promises*, which run all upon Condition of our *Obedience*, we pervert; the Force of all his *Threatnings*, which denounce *Woes* to *every* Sin and Transgression, we *cancel*. We do as much as in us lies, to *corrupt* his Word, and to *bely* his very Gospel. We make his whole Religion to signifie another thing than what he intended. For we make it *allow*, what he *forbids*; and *encourage* such, as he *threatens*; and *save* those, whom at the Day of Judgment he will *condemn*. And since this *perverse Faith* and *Knowledge*, which *believes* what it *likes*, and is *infidel* to all the *rest*; which sets up *one* part of his Word against *another*, by making his *Promises* to undermine his *Precepts*, and the *Truth* of his *Doctrines* to render all his *Threatnings false* and use-

useless: I say, since such an *untowardly, partial,* and *gainsaying knowledge* and *belief* as *this,* is in very deed so plain a *Libel* to his *Person,* so *hateful* a *violence* to his *Truth,* and such a *contradicting* piece of *infidelity* to his *Gospel,* it can never be thought to be *that Obedience* which he *commands* and *encourages,* but such a piece of *contumelious flattery* and *fawning Disobedience,* as he will most *severely punish* and *condemn.*

But if we believe his *whole* Gospel, and besides the faith of his *Doctrines* and *Promises,* take moreover all his *Precepts* to be such as he *enjoins,* and all his *threatnings,* in their *true* meaning, to be such as he will *execute*; and yet, for all that, in our *works* and *practice despise* and *sin* against them; then is *such* our *faith* and *knowledge,* so far from rendring our condition *safe and comfortable,* that in very deed it makes it more *desperate,* and utterly bereft of all *colour* and *excuse.* For it takes from us all *pleas* for disobedience, and leaves us not *so* much as the *common* refuge of all misdoing; the pretence that *we did offend but did not know it.* It makes every sin which we commit, to be acted with a *high hand,* and all our *offences,* to become *contempt,* our *disobedience, rebellion*; and our *transgressions, presumptuous.* For we sin then with *open* eyes, we know God's Commands, but refuse to practise them; we discern our duty, but despise it. It makes us not only to *renounce* his *Authority,* but also to *defie* his *Power.* For we know his Almighty Strength, but we will not fear it; we see his dreadful threatnings, but yet *dare* to commit the things which he has threatned in despite of them. We see and believe that our Death is entailed upon our disobedience, but for all that we chuse and run upon it. And such a state as *this,* every man must needs see is so far from gaining his *favour,* and ascertaining his *acceptance*; that in reality it is a *continued heightning* of every *provocation,* an *habitual hostility,* and state of *crying sin.*

But if ever our *orthodox faith* and *professions* avail us unto *life* and *Pardon,* they must end in our *obedient works* and *actions.* We must do that which we know God requires, and practise that pure Religion which we profess; *If ye know these things,* says our Saviour, *happy are ye if ye do them,* Joh. 13. 17. *It is not every* verbal Professor, every *one that saith unto me,* or calls me *Lord, Lord,*

Lord, that shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he only *that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven, Mat.* 7. 21. We are condemn'd out of our own mouths, if we commend Christ's Religion, whilst we contemn and disobey it: every word which we speak in its behalf, is a charge against our own selves, and every plea which we make for *it*, is to *us* an accusation. For if it be a Religion so *pure*, so *good*, so *worthy of God*, and so *beneficial to Men*, as we profess it is; the more *unpardonable* wretches *we*, who *transgress* and *act* against it. All the praises which we heap upon our Duty, are a most bitter invective upon our own practice; and the more we commend Christ's Religion and Laws, the more we condemn our own Transgressions; so that now God in exacting the punishment, be it as severe as it well can, only executes our own sentence. We are made the *worse* for our *Knowledge*, if our *actions* are not *ruled* by it; for it shews plainly, that our *Lusts* are most *obstinate*, and our *Wills* most *wicked*; when for all we are clearly shewed the *Laws*, the *Promises*, and the *Threats of God*, we can yet *despise* them all, and for the *short* pleasure of a silly sin, *transgress*, and *act* against them. And since it doth thus enhanse our *Sin*, we may be sure that it will proportionably encrease our *Punishment*. *For he that knows his Master's will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes*, Luke 12. 47.

And thus we see, that this thinking to be saved by the *labour* of our *minds*, without any *works* of our *lives* and *practice*; and coming to Heaven barely by a *True Belief*, and *Orthodox Opinions*, and *Right Professions*, without ever *obeying* in our *Works* and *Actions*; is *one* of those *false* and *delusive* grounds, whereupon Men shift off the necessity of this service *with all their strength*, the service of their *actions*.

And another false ground of shifting off the same service is,

2. The delusive confidence which wicked Men have of being saved at the last Day, for an *obedience of idle desires*, and *ineffective wishes*.

It is a *strange* conceit which some people have been taught, *viz.* that *the desire of Grace is Grace*, and that *God will* at the last Day *judge Men to have obeyed*, although they have not *wrought*, but only *desired* it. There

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is a *complaisant* sort of *Casuistry*, and a much easier than ever God made, that has been brought into the World, which bids men to *hope well*, though they *do nothing*, so long as they find in themselves a *desire* that they could do it. They wish they were what God expects, and that they performed what he commands; but they do no more but wish it. They sit still, and work no more now they have wished it, than they did before. Theirs is a *weakly infant desire*, it *just lives*, but that is all, it can *effect nothing*. For the *smallest lust* is too *strong* for it, and the *least temptation overbears* it; the desire of the Vertue is hush'd when the opportunity of the Sin returns, for notwithstanding all the contrary desire, this is acted at the next offer. Obedience is not desired so much as their ease; for they love it not so well, as to be at the necessary pains for it. It is a squeamish, delicate desire, it would obey if that could be without trouble, but it will undergo nothing for Obedience.

But this is a conceit as *strange*, as it is *destructive*; and such, wherewith the *simplest* of Men suffer themselves to be imposed upon in no *other* matters, but only this, which most of all requires their care and caution, *viz.* The *eternal welfare of their Souls*, and *the truth of their Obedience*. For who ever took his *desire of gain* to be *gain*, his *desire of ease* to be *ease*, his *desire of meat* to be *food*, his *desire of cloaths* to be *rayment*, or his *desire of knowledge* to be *knowledge*? And why then must that be *true in Religion*, which is always *false* in *common life*? and the *desire of grace* be said to be *grace*, and the *desire of obedience*, *obedience*? Our *desires* are *one* thing, but the *thing desired* is *another*. Our *desires* are *within*, but the Object desired is *without* us. Our desires are *our own*, but the thing desired is *wanting*. For so far is our *desire* of any thing from being the *very thing* it self which is *desired*, that it is not always joined with it, but we possess *one*, whilst we are without the *other*. For alas! we find that those things which we *need*, and have a *mind* to, do not come at the *beck* of a *desire*, nor are procured by a *wish*; but we must do more than *desire* them, *endeavour* after them, and *work* or *act* for them, or else we shall sit *without* them. A Man doth not presently *possess meat*, because he is *hungry*; or is *owner* of a *great estate*, because he is *covetous*; no, he must *labour*

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and *seek* as well as *desire*, both for the *one* and the *other*; or else, let him desire what he will, he shall *get* neither.

'Tis true, a *desire of money* is a great *preparative* to *get money*, and a *desire of knowledge* is a good *disposition* to *attain knowledge*; because our *appetites* and *desires*, are of all the *passions*, the great and most *immediate spring* of our *outward works* and *operations*. For *delight* begets *love*, and *love* ends in *desire*, and *desire* carries us on to *work* and *labour* for the thing desired. And thus our *desires of Grace* and *Obedience*, are *Grace* and *Obedience*. That is, Our *desire of Grace*, is not *Grace* it self; nor our *desire of Obedience*, *Obedience*; but a *good step* and *degree* towards them. It is so *metonymically*, it is the *Principle* and the *Cause* of it. For therefore we acquire Grace, and perform Obedience, because we desire them. We should take no pains about them, were it not for our desires of them, but because we have a mind to them, therefore we labour after them.

But till our desires come on to *this effect*, they have no title to the rewards of it. Because although *they* are a *gift* of God's Grace, 'tis true, as well as *Obedience* it self is; yet are they not *that* Grace, which in the Judgment shall *entitle* us to pardon and happiness. For the *promise* to the *desire of Obedience*, is *one*; but the *promise* to *Obedience* it self *is another*. If we *sincerely desire* to *do God's will*, *i. e.* if we desire it so, as according to the best of our power to endeavour after it; the *promise* to that is, *That we shall be enabled to do it*. For one promise of the *New Covenant* is, That *God will grant unto us to serve him in holiness and righteousness*, Luke 1. 74, 75. which he will *then* do, *when* we *desire* it of him, by *giving his holy Spirit to them that ask him*, Luke 11. 13. But if we do *indeed* obey it, the promise to that is, that we shall be saved by it. For *Christ is become the Author of eternal salvation, to them that obey him*, Heb. 5. 9. And it is said expressly of *them* that *obey*, that *they shall have right to the tree of life*, Rev. 22. 24. So that to the *honest desire* of obedience, all that God *promises*, is the *power to perform* and *work obedience*; but *that* whereunto *mercy* and *life* is promised, is nothing less than *obedience* it self. For, *to the working out our salvation*, it is required, as Saint *Paul* says, that we be wrought upon, not only,

only, to *will* what God commands, but also to *do* it, *Phil.* 2. 12, 13.

The great pretence, whereby Men of idle unworking desires, would plead for their unfruitfulness, and support their hopes of a happy Sentence under a life of disobedience; is a mistaken sense of these words of S. *Paul* in his Epistle to the *Galatians*: *The Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh: so that you cannot do the things that you would*, Gal. 5. 17. Which words they interpret thus: The *Spirit* in all good Men *lusteth* against the *Flesh*, but not so *far* as to *prevail over* it: for although they may *will* and *desire* with the *Spirit*, yet they cannot *do* those things which they would. And if this be so, 'tis plain that we have warrant enough to hope for mercy, notwithstanding we only *desire*, but are not able to *perform*.

But this is a plain perverting of the Apostle's words, from the Apostle's own meaning. For although he says, that the *lusting* is on *both* sides, both of the *Flesh* against the *Spirit*, and of the *Spirit* against the *Flesh*; yet as for *ineffectiveness*, or *not doing what is willed and desired*, that he charges only upon *one*. He leaves it purely and solely to the *Flesh's* share, which can indeed *lust* and *desire* evil things even in *regenerate* Men, but is not able to prevail so far, as to *work* and *effect* them, because the *overruling* will of the *Spirit* checks and restrains it.

And to shew this to be his sense, I need do no more than set down his words in that order wherein they stand; which is as follows: *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and you shall* not work and *fulfil the lusts of the Flesh*. Not work and fulfil them, I say, notwithstanding you will still feel an ineffective and unconquering stirring of them. *For the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh, and these two are contrary one to the other. So that* in walking or working, as I said, after the lustings and desires of the Spirit, you fulfil not the lusts of the Flesh which are contrary to it; *ye cannot do*, or you do not *the things* that your Flesh lusts after, which *yet*, through its lusting, *ye would*, ver. 16, 17. Whereas, if this *last* Clause were expounded thus, *Ye do not the things that your Spirit lusts after, which yet, through its lusting, ye would do*; it would destroy that which the Apostle brings it to *confirm*, *viz.* their not *willing* and

desiring

desiring only, but *doing* or *walking*, also *after the Spirit*, so as *not to fulfil the Works of the Flesh*, ver. 16. Which in plain English, is to make the Apostle in the same breath, to *say* and *unsay*; to tell them of *walking in the Spirit*, and *not fulfilling the lusts of the Flesh*, because they *do not after the Spirit*, but *do fulfil the lusts of the Flesh*. Which is flatly to make the Apostle's proof, to contradict his affirmation.

If therefore we would approve our selves regenerate, and have a just hope of life and pardon at the last Day; we must not only *wish* and *desire*, but *live* and *walk* after the *Spirit*. The service of the *Flesh*, indeed, must go no further than *desire*; and although we shall all of us more or less, have lustings from it, yet must we not * fulfil them. But as for the service of *God*, it must have our *hands* as well as our *hearts*; for it is not enough to *will* and *desire* what he commands, but we must moreover *practise* and *perform* it.

* Rom. 13. 14.

As for the *affirmative* Commands of God, it is not required that we perform every one of them at *every time*; for so our whole life would be taken up in the keeping of one Command, and we could never observe *all*, since we cannot do any *two* things, and much less such a *multitude*, at the same time. But all that Obedience which God requires of us to *them*, is that we act them, as his *Providence*, and ordering of *times* and *occasions*, gives us *opportunity*. Now although for the main Body and greatest Number of them, *every man* has opportunities returning almost *every day*; yet for a perfect and compleat performance of some of them, *some men* have not opportunity at *some times*, nor *others* in *all their lives*. I instance in the affirmative Command of *Alms-giving*: a Man who has but little, can give but little at any time; and a rich Man, if he be in a strange place, and have no great stock about him, although he have a great Object of Charity, can yet make but small relief. So that in *both* these, the *work* of Alms and *outward performance*, must needs be very *strait*; although *both* of them in their *hearts* and *desires*, are never so *liberal*. They have not power and opportunity to *act* as they *would*; and would perform more, if their circumstances would allow it. And now in this Case, God doth not *measure* their *obedience*, by the *size* of their *outward performance*; he looks not so much at what

what *was done*, as at *what would have been done*, had they had ability. So that they shall be accepted acording to the *greatness* of their *will*, and not according to the *narrowness* of their *deed*; and their reward shall be fitted to what was in their heart, and not that which appeared in their action.

And this very Case, is expresly determined by S. *Paul*, in his *second* Epistle to the *Corinthians*. For exhorting them to contribute to the relief of the Saints in *Judea*, as the *poor* Christians in *Macedonia* had already done most *liberally*, he encourages them to give what they could out of their present livelyhood, by telling them, that albeit it were not so much as they could wish, and were forward in their own hearts to give if they were able; yet in God's acceptance it should be estimated, as if it were. *For if there be first a willing mind*, saith he, *it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not*, Chap. 8. v. 11, 12.

This is the very case, for which the Apostle lays down this rule, as any man may see who will be at the pains to perule that Chapter. He speaks it upon no other occasion, but where our Wills are really ready to perform farther, than our *outward fortune* enables us. For where our heart is indeed ready to do *more* than in our necessitous circumstances we can do, there God looks upon the *will*, and not upon the *work*; and rewards us according to the *compass* of our *desires*, but not according to the *scantiness* of our *performance*.

But if any man shall conclude from hence that when it is *in his Power* to do what is commanded, God will still accept of an *idle desire* without an active performance; he may use S. *Paul*'s *words* indeed, but he perverts them wholly to his *own meaning*. For the Apostle spake them in *one* case, and there they are *true*; but he applies them to *another*, and there they will *deceive* him. Because the *will* is never accepted for the *deed*, when it is in our power to *do* as well as to *will*; and whersoever we have opportunity to *do* what we *desire*, it is not the *willing*, but the *doing* that must save us; as the Apostle himself intimates in this very place, when he presses them to compleat their *readiness* of *will*, by *performing* according as they were able, verse 11.

So that this thinking to be saved by an *idle desire*, and an *ineffective wish* of obedience, without ever obeying in our *works* and *actions*, is every whit as false and delusive, as the former deceitful ground was of being saved at the last day, barely upon the account of an *Orthodox Faith* and *Opinion*.

Thirdly, Another false ground, whereupon men hope to be saved, tho' they *work* disobedience, is because when they do so, it is through the *violence* of a *great* and *overpowering temptation*, which they *see* and *resist*, but cannot *prevail over*. They are drawn in by a *great gain*, or a *great pleasure*, the *bait* laid for them is *very enticing*, and there is no withstanding it.

* ἥδ μὲν καλῶν πραξέων πολλάκις τις ἑαυτὸν αἰτιᾶται, τὴν δὲ αἰσχρῶν. οὐχ ἑαυτὸν, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἡδονὴν. Andron. Rhod. Paraph. in Eth. Arist. l. 3 c. 2.

This indeed is a great and unusual pretence. For men would gladly shift off their sin, and charge it upon any thing but their own selves. They would have the *pleasures of their flesh*, and the *pride of their hearts*, both served at once; enjoy all the *pleasures of sin*, and yet have the *praises of vertue*. * *Whensoever they do well*, as a great Philosopher has observed, *they would arrogate that to themselves*; *but when they do amiss*, *they would impute that to the pleasure that misled them*, *and to the strength of temptation*.

But this is a very vain shift, and a thin pretence. For what is it that makes any *temptation strong*, but the *wickedness of mens own hearts*? They are slavishly in love with it, and therefore they cannot resist it, but are overcome by it. † *It is ridiculous to think*, saith the same excellent Philosopher, *that the pleasure of the sin which is without us*, *is the cause of our sinful action*; *and not rather that we our selves are*, *who are so wickedly inclined*, *as to be so easily taken by it*. It is only the strength of our *own sinful lusts*, that gives such an irresistible strength to the *outward temptation*. A *great offer of gain* indeed cannot be withstood by a *covetous heart*; and an *inviting beauty*, and a *fair opportunity*, are irresistible to a *slave of lust*, and a *lascivious reigning inclination*. But if the man is *above the world*, and his *heart is chast*, they are of no *force*, nor can they offer *any violence* at all.

† γελοῖον δοκεῖν αἰτίαν νομίζειν τὴν πρᾶξιν τὴν ἔξωθεν κολακὴν καὶ ἡδεῖαν, καὶ μὴ ἑαυτὸν ὅτι τοιοῦτος ῥᾳδίως ἁλισκόμενον. Ibid. & Arist. Eth. ad Nicom. l. 3. c. 1.

It is the *wickedness of our own hearts lusts* therefore, which are so deeply in love with them, and so unbridledly bent after them, that gives all the *prevailing* force, and *overpowring strength*, to *outward temptations*. But

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now tis our *Sin*, and so can by no means plead our *excuse*; it is our *damnable disease*, and therefore it can never prove our *saving remedy*. For this is that *reigning power* of *Sin*, which the *Gospel* has indispensibly required us to *mortifie*, but not to *submit* to. It is only *if you through the spirit, do mortifie the deeds of the body*, says S. *Paul, that you shall live*, Rom. 8. 13. Col. 3. 5.

But if we are not under this *damnable servitude* to *Sin*, there are no *temptations* so *strong*, but that *God* has given us *sufficient defensatives* against them. For the present offer of a *Gibbet*, would fright away the most *endearing temptations*; the near expectation of a *great Estate*, or of a *Crown* would make us prevail over it. And what are these to *Hell-fire*, and an *eternal* Crown of Glory? *Heaven* therefore and *Hell*, when they can be considered of, are an answer to all temptation in the world; they will engage our hearts *more*, than all the *endearments* of a lust, and infinitely *out-do* all the *baits* and *allurements* of Sin.

If we commit sin then, it is no *sufficient* excuse to us that the *temptation* was strong, because it was only the *strength* of our own *unmortified lusts* which made it so. For we *loved* the *sinful pleasure* too well, and that was the reason why it *overpower'd* us. And since the strength of temptation is owing only to the strength of sin, it can never excuse us from undergoing punishment. So that *this* must needs be a false hope, to think of being excused for our sin, because we acted it through the *violence of a great temptation.*

Fourthly, Another ground of false confidence, whereupon men hope to be saved, although they do not *obey* in their *works* and *actions*, but are workers of sin and disobedience; is, because when they do *transgress*, it is with *reluctance* and *unwillingness*. Albeit in their *actions* they do *serve sin*, yet in their *minds* they do not *approve* of it, their service of it is an *unwilling* and a *slavish service*. They cannot sin freely, and at their own ease but with fearfulness and regret. For the *Conviction of their* duty abides in their *Consciences*, the *fear of hell torments*, sticks fast in their *Souls*; they cannot shake off either their *sense of duty*, or their *fears of punishment*. So that even when they do sin against God, it is with *remorse* of mind, and *fearfulness* of apprehension.

They cannot embrace their sin with a *full choice*, because they know it is not an *unmixed* pleasure. They believe and know it to be of a *compound*, and *mixt nature*; to have some *present pleasure* which will delight, but withal much *future punishment* which will torment them. And since they know it to be a *composition* of *good* and *ill*, they do not *perfectly* either *love* or *hate*, *chuse* or *refuse* it. Their will is *distracted* by different motives in the same choice; for the *future pains* would draw them to *reject*, but the present *joys* invite them to *embrace* it. So that in a different *degree*, they both *will* and *nill* the same thing,; they would *have* it, and yet they would *avoid* it. For they would enjoy what they desire, but withal they would keep off from what they fear: They have a mind to commit the sin, because it will please them for the *present*; and yet they are afraid of it, because of that wrath which it treasures up for them against the time to come.

But notwithstanding all their *conflict* in their own *choice*, yet at last their *sin prevails*, and they obey it. For they had rather *hazard* all its torments, than miss of its delights; they are unwilling to venture upon those dangers which it brings, but yet they had rather venture on *them* than go without it. They sin *unwillingly*, just as a *labourer works*, or as a *Souldier fights unwillingly*; that is, they do not *will* it for *it self*, they would *not do* it unless they were *hired* to it. For, considering all things, they will to act, and not to omit it; their Will is against it indeed at the *first* sight, but upon better consideration it resolves upon it, and, all things laid together, they chuse to commit the sin rather than to forbear it.

But now this is such a *State*, as will never bring any man to *Heaven*: For whether he transgress *willingly* or with *reluctancy*, is not the question; but if he *chuse* at last to *disobey*, when God comes to Judgment, he will be sure to pronounce upon him that *death*, which he has established for the punishment of disobedience. Because for all he *fears* and *mistrusts*, *grumbles* and *repines*; yet he *serves* and *obeys* his *lusts* all the while notwithstanding. He works at their will, and doth what they command him. He serves not with a full heart, or a fearless mind; but yet is their servant still.

'Tis

'Tis true indeed, it is some *mitigation* of his Sin, that he doth it with *regret*, and the Transgression is something the less, for being acted not without Reluctance and Aversion. It shews that his *sense of Duty*, is not *quite lost*; his *Conscience wholly seared*; or his *Fear* of God *utterly extinguished*. It is some Extenuation, that he *startles* at the Offence; for it argues that his Soul is not *wholly depraved*, or his Heart *harden'd* in Disobedience. But although his Sins be not of the *highest* rate, yet he is *a lost* Sinner still. For so long as his *Lusts* prevail, and he chuses at last to *act* and *commit* them, he *serves* and *obeys* them. It is his *Works* and *Actions* that must determine his *Service* and *Obedience*; so that if he *commit* Sin, he is the *Servant* of Sin. *Willing* or *unwilling*, may *extenuate* or *heighten* his Disobedience, but not utterly *destroy*, or *alter* the *nature* of it.

For, indeed, something of *struggling* and *regret* is to be found in the *Obedience* and *Disobedience* of the greatest part of the World. There being *few* so good, as to obey without all *Reluctance*, and *few* so wicked, as to Sin without all *Remorse*. For as long as we are in *this* Life, we are a *mixt* and *compound* Substance, of *Soul* and *Body*, *Flesh* and *Spirit*. Our *carnal appetite* draws us on to *forbidden* things, and to transgress those Restraints which God's Law has set to it. And our *Conscience*, being enlightned with the *Knowledge* of God's Laws, and allured by his *Promises*, and affrighted with his *Threatnings*, would perswade us to keep within *his Bounds*, and to *act Obedience*. Now these *two contrary* and *gainsaying* Principles, *distract* our *Choice*, and *divide* our *Wills*, so that when we close with *one* of them, it is not without the Grudging and Reluctance of *the other*. We would, and we would not; one inclines us for a thing, and the other against it. *The flesh*, says S. *Paul*, *lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary one to the other, so that you cannot* fulfil both their Desires, and *do* each of *the things that you would*, Gal. 5. 17. For if we *obey*, it is through the *repining* of our *Appetites*; and if we *transgress*, it is with the *Remorse* and *Lashings* of our *Consciences*: On *both* sides, there is something that is evil, whereof we are *afraid*, and which we *would not*; our Will is *imperfect*, and with *Reluctance*; and we *will* and *chuse* in some

measure *unwillingly*, whether it be to *work Obedience* or *Sin*.

As for the *Saints* in *Heaven*, after the *Resurrection*, it is true, they shall have no *gainsaying Appetites*. For their *Flesh* will be in *perfect* Subjection to the *Spirit*; their *Will* shall have nothing to *seduce* it, but shall stand always *firm* and *entire* for God; so that they shall obey without *any thing* of *Reluctance* or *Regret*.

And as for *some* of the *profligate*, and *prophane Sinners* here on *earth*, they have *now* already so quite benumb'd their *Consciences*, that they neither *allure* nor *threaten*, *admonish* nor *accuse* them. And they sin without all Contention; they transgress, and do not dispute; their lusts hurry them without any Opposition; so that they disobey most *willingly*, and free from all *Remorse*.

But as for *all* the *Good*, and the *generality* of the *Wicked* here on *Earth*, they are of a *middle* rate. They both of them act through Strife, and Conquest; their Consent is courted on *both* Sides, and when they comply with *one*, they must refuse the *other*. Both *Flesh* and *Spirit* struggle in them, although at last but *one* prevails. For in the *Regenerate* good Man, the Flesh stirs, but it cannot conquer; they have bodies, and bodily Appetites, but they subdue them, and, as *S. Paul* says, *keep them under*, 1 Cor. 9. 27. So that all the while the Spirit *rules* in them, when the Flesh doth but in *vain solicite*; this may *tempt*, but it cannot *govern*; for the Spirit gives them Laws, and what it commands, that in their Actions they obey. But in the *Wicked* and *Disobedient*, the Case is quite opposite. For in *them*, although their *Consciences smite* them, yet can it not *prevail* with them; it suggests, but they will not hearken; it shews the way, but they will not follow it; in all things their Lusts are the Governours of their Lives and Actions; so that although the Lashes of their Consciences may sharpen and embitter, yet they are not able to disappoint the Service of their Sin.

In *all* the Obedience therefore, and in the *greatest part* of the Transgressions here on *Earth*, there is still something of *Struggling* and *Reluctance*. Men act not by a *Will* that is void of all *Restraint*, or by a *Desire* and *Choice*, which is *free* from all *unwillingness*; but there is a *mixture*

of

of *Love* and *Hatred*, an *unwilling Will* that carries them on, either to act obedience, or to disobey.

But notwithstanding their *ineffective wishes*, and *imperfect wouldings* to the contrary; it is their *peremptory Will* and *last Choice*, which shall determine their *condition*. For if they will and chuse to do what God commands, in spite of all the gainsaying wishes raised by their fleshly Appetites; they shall be pardoned and acquitted. But if they will and chuse to do what God forbids, in spite of all contrary Admonitions and Threatnings of their Consciences; they shall die in their Disobedience.

And the Reason is plain; for he *serves* his *Sin*, and *fulfils* his *Lust*, and his *Thraldom* to it is so *absolute*, that no *Aids* of the *Spirit*, nor any *Suggestions* of his *Conscience* can *deliver* him from it. *He that committeth Sin*, saith our Saviour, *is the servant of sin*, John 8. 34. So long as it *conquers*, it doth indeed *inslave* him: *For of whom a man is overcome, of the same*, says S. *Peter*, *he is brought in Bondage*, 2 Pet. 2. 19. If we yield our selves up to *serve* it, we do indeed *obey* it; and must expect that *Death* which is denounced upon such Obedience. *Know you not*, saith another Apostle, *that to whom you yield your selves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey; whether of sin unto Death, or of obedience unto Righteousness*, Rom. 6. 16. If we are at the Beck of our Lusts, and go where they send, and do what they command us, and acknowledge their Pleasure in all things to be a Law to us; we are perfect Slaves to them, and liable to all that Misery which is denounced upon them. We serve and obey them; and that shall surely bring us to suffer for them. For it is the *fulfilling* of our Lusts, the *doing* or *walking* after them, and the *obeying* of our Sin, which Christ's Gospel *threatens* so severely, whatever *Mind* we do it with. *If you live after the flesh*, saith the Apostle, *you shall die*; and it is only, *if you through the Spirit do mortifie the Deeds of the Body*, that *you shall live*, Rom. 8. 13. When Christ comes to Judgment, the Enquiry will not be, whether we sinned with a *full delight*, or with *fear* and *reluctance*; but whether in very Deed, without repenting of it afterwards, we sinned *wilfully*, or transgressed at all: For we have what shall be his Sentence at that Day,

from his own Mouth already, *Depart from me ye that work iniquity*, Mat. 7. 23.

So that it will be no sufficient Plea for any Man at the last Day, who has disobeyed in *Deed* and *wrought Wickedness*, to say, That he did it with *Backwardness* and *Remorse*. For that which God indispensibly requires, is that he should not do it at all; and he will only deceive himself, if he ever expect to be accepted otherwise. For as the *Hopes of Salvation* upon mere *Orthodox Opinions*, or *ineffective desires* of *Obedience*, or *sinning* through a *strong Temptation* are utterly *Delusive*, and sure to fail them who trust to them; so is the *fourth* Ground likewise, viz. *Our Hopes of being accepted notwithstanding our Sins, because we transgressed with reluctance and unwillingness.*

CHAP. IV.

A further Pursuit of this last Ground of shifting off the Obedience of our Actions, in an Exposition of the seventh Chapter to the Romans.

THAT which has been the great occasion of this last Pretence, whereby Men justifie themselves in the *practice* of Disobedience, *viz.* because *when they do transgress, it is with Reluctancy and an unwilling Mind*; is a wrong understanding of the Words of S. *Paul*, in the seventh Chapter of his Epistle to the *Romans*. For
Verse 15. thus, says he, *That which I do, I*, being sufficiently instructed in the Law which forbids it, in my Mind and Conscience, *allow not*. *For what*, through the Laws, commanding, *I would* do, *that do I not*; *but what*, from the Laws prohibiting, *I hate*, and would not do, *that*
18. *do I*. *The good that I would do, I do not*. *For although*
19. *to will it is present with me*, yet through the prevailing Power of my Flesh, *how to perform* and *practise that which is good I find not*. *But the evil which I would not do, that do I*. And all this happens to me, by reason
23. that *the Law of my Lusts*, or *Members*, *wars against the Law of* God *in my Mind* or *Conscience*, and that with so much Success as to make me act against my Conscience,

ence, and *bring me into* a slavish Observance or *Captivity to the Law of sin, which is in my members. So that I my self*, or the * same I, who, *with the Mind* and *Conscience*, in approving and willing *serve the Law of God*, do yet *with the Flesh*, in my bodily and outward Works and Operations, serve the Law of Sin.

* αὐτὸς ἐγὼ, verse, 25.

Now since no less a Man than S. *Paul* himself speaks thus of *sinning against his will*, of doing what he disallows, and transgressing through the Power of a ruling Lust against his Conscience: It may well be thought reasonable, for any other Man to Conclude himself in a safe condition, although he do so likewise. For who would desire to be more perfect than S. *Paul*? Who would ever scruple to have the same Lot in the next World with an Apostle? If an unwillingness in Sin, and transgressing with Reluctance, could bear him out notwithstanding he did against his Duty, and in Works and Actions disobeyed his Lord; who can ever question, but that it will be a sufficient Plea for us also?

And indeed if S. *Paul* had spoken all that of himself, and meant it of his own Person; the Inference is undeniable, and it is not to be doubted but it would. But for a full Answer to this Allegation, I think it is plain, that S. *Paul*, when he expresses all those things in the *first person*, uses that meerly out of *modesty*, but not out of *truth*.

For he was upon an *odious* Topick, representing the *unmortified* state and *sinful* condition of *those Persons*, who had no other help against their *Lusts*, but the *Religion* and *Law of Moses*. And because this was a *Charge*, which they who were most guilty would not love to hear of, that he may soften the matter as much as may be, and discover things of so much Reproach with the least Offence, he wisely takes all the Business, and fathers all the *shameful Narrative* upon himself; and expresses it, not in *theirs*, to whom it *really* did belong, but in his *own person*.

And as for this *Metaschematism*, or speaking things that are *odious* in his *own name*, when indeed they belong not to him, but to *other* Men, it is very usual with the Apostle. For in this Disguise he recites a most blasphemous Perversion, which some Men had made of his most pious Doctrine, *Rom.* 3. *If the truth of God*, or his faithfulness in performing his Covenant

with

with us, *hath more abandoned to his Glory, through my lye*, or unfaithfulneſs in breaking my Covenant with him (which makes the moſt that can be for the Honour of God's Faithfulneſs, ſince no perfidiouſneſs of ours can weary or provoke him out of it) *why yet am I*, not I *Paul*, who could never act thus falſly, or argue thus prophanely, but I blaſphemous objector, *judged as a Sinner?* v. 7. And the ſame way of Speech he obſerves again, when he charges the wicked Lives of thoſe, who have given up their Names to Chriſt, not upon his Religion, but upon their own ſelves. *If while we ſeek to be juſtified by Chriſt*, in the Profeſſion of his Religion and not of *Moſes's* Law, *we our ſelves are ſtill found Sinners*, and flagitious in our Lives as ever, *is therefore Chriſt the Miniſter of ſin? God forbid. For if I build again the things which* at my very Baptiſm into Chriſtianity *I deſtroyed*, as 'tis plain all Chriſtians do, who after Baptiſm prove cuſtomary Sinners; it is no longer Chriſt who would reſcue and free me from Sin, but I my ſelf, not I *Paul*, but I flagitious Chriſtian that *make my ſelf a Tranſgreſſor*, Gal. 2. 17, 18. Thus alſo he ſpeaks in his own Perſon, when he only perſonates the *ſtrong*, but *uncomplying* Chriſtian, 1 Cor. 6. *All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient*, ver. 12. And when he perſonates the *uncharitable* Chriſtian, 1 *Cor.* 13. *If I have all Faith and have no Charity, what doth it profit me?* ver. 2. And the ſame inoffenſive way he uſes, in noting Faults in * other places.

* 1 Cor. 10. v. 22, 23. & 29, 30.

And ſuch an obliging Diſguiſe, in reprehending and expoſing the Faults of others, is moſt uſual among our ſelves. Nothing being more common in our ordinary Diſcourſe, than when we would be ſharp in reproving and inveighing againſt any thing, by a moſt courteous Fiction to put it in our own Caſe, and to ſuppoſe that *we our* ſelves ſhould do this or that. When as in the mean time we are no further concerned in it, than to be able under this Diſguiſe with more Succeſs, and leſs Offence, to diſparage and chaſtiſe it.

And this way of *transferring odious things to our ſelves*, when we would deſcribe and reprove them, which is ſo uſual with all the World, and with St. *Paul* in other Caſes, is particularly uſed by him in his Character of the ineffective Striver in the ſeventh Chapter of

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the Epistle to the *Romans*. He speaks not those things above recited, of *willing, but not performing*, &c. in his own person, or in the person of any regenerate man; as will plainly appear from this reason.

Because in that Chapter, such things are said of the person there spoken of, as can by no means agree to S. *Paul*, or to any *regenerate* person; so that the Apostle must be made to falsifie, if he should be understood to speak of them.

Such things, I say, are there spoken, as can by no means agree to S. *Paul* himself. for we read

Of the person spoken of there,	*Of Saint* Paul *himself elsewhere,*
That *he* lived and *was alive without the law* of the ten Commandments, *once*, ver. 7. 9.	That he was both *born* and *bred* up *under the Law*, being *circumcised the eighth Day, of the Stock of Israel, an Hebrew of the Hebrews*: or an Hebrew both by his Father and his Mothers side, *Phil.* 3. 5.
That the Law of his members wars against the Law of his mind, and brings him into captivity to the Law of sin, which is seated and rules *in his members*, v. 23.	That *he keeps under his Body, and* is not led captive by it, but on the contrary *brings it into subjection* and Captivity, 1 *Cor* 9. 27.
That *how to* do or *perform what is good, he finds not*, v. 18.	That *he can do all things* which are good *through Christ that strengthens him*, Phil. 4. 13.
That *sin works in him all manner of lust or concupiscence*, v. 8.	That it works none, but that instead of *lusting* and *coveting worldly* things, *the world is crucified to him, and he unto the world*, Gal. 6. 14.
That he is *captivated* and conquered, and as a van-	That *he has fought a good fight against it*, 2 Tim. 4.

quiſhed ſlave, *ſold under ſin*, v. 14. 23.

That he ſinned againſt his Conſcience. For *what I do*, ſays he, in my practice, *that I allow not* in my Mind or Conſcience: *but what I hate* and diſapprove, *that I do*, v. 15. 19.

That he is in a ſtate of death: For *ſin revived and he died*, verſ. 9. and by *deceiving him, it had ſlain him*, verſ. 11. The *good law he had found to be unto him the occaſion of death*, by his falling into that diſobedience whereto it had threatned it, *verſ.* 10. For *the motions of ſin, which were* not, and could not be reſtrained *by the law, wrought in his members to bring forth* damning ſins, or *fruit unto death*, v. 5.

4. 7. And that *by the* † *Grace of God through Chriſt* he is delivered from it; *Rom.* 7. 25.

† χάριτι τῇ ἐν exem. Clara & verſ. La. No ἐυχαριστῶ τῷ θεῷ.

That *he knew* or was * *conſcious* of *nothing by himſelf*, 1 Cor. 4. 4. but that *he truſted he had a good Conſcience*, and that *in all things*, being *willing to live honeſtly*, Heb. 13. 18. Acts 23. 1. For this had all along been his care; he having made it his buſineſs, and *exerciſed himſelf to have*, not now and then, but *always a conſcience void of offence*, or not wounded and ſmitten with the ſenſe of any offences, either *towards God or men*, Acts 24. 16.

* συνοιδα.

That *the law of the ſpirit of life hath made him free from the Law of ſin and death*, Rom. 8. 2. That *he has finiſhed his courſe* to his advantage; ſo as *there is laid up for him*, not a painful death, as the puniſhment of his diſobedience; but a *Crown of* Glory, as a reward *of* his *righteouſneſs, which the righteous judge will give him at the laſt day*, 2 Tim. 4. 8.

If

If therefore we will believe S. *Paul*, and let those accounts which he gives of himself explain his own meaning, I think he cannot be that very person who is there spoken of. For they are persons altogether of a *different* stamp, and a *contrary* character: they are as opposite, as one *under the Law*, and one *without it*; as a *servant of God*, and a *slave of sin*; as a *spiritual*, and a *carnal man*; as *one whose conscience approves*, and *another whose conscience condemns him*; as *a child of God, and a child of darkness*; as *an heir of Heaven*, and a *subject of Hell*. So that he cannot speak of himself in that *seventh* Chapter, and in the *other* places too; because then he would appear inconsistent with himself, and be found false in his own story. And therefore as sure as S. *Paul* is true, he says all that is spoken there in an inoffensive disguise, not intending to give a *character of* his *own person*, but to *personate another* man.

Nay, I add further, that the *person* whom he represents in that *Chapter*, is not only *another* from himself, but also one of a quite *opposite* and *contrary* character. He is not only *no Apostle*, but even *no good Christian* or *regenerate* man. For such things are there said of him, as, if S. *Paul* and the other *Apostles* say true, are *inconsistent* with a *regenerate state*, and destructive of Salvation. As will plainly appear, by considering those things which are said

Of *the person described there*,	Of *the regenerate elsewhere*,
That *with his flesh* or fleshly members, *he obeys the law of Sin*, ver. 25. And this he is forced to do, and cannot help it. For *the law of his members wars against the law of his mind, and brings him into captivity to the law of sin and death*, v. 23. He is absolutely enslaved to it, as ever any servant was to his master, who was sold in	That as for *their members, they yield them not to be instruments unto sin, but unto righteousness*; because now since their regenerations into true Christians, *Sin is not to reign in their mortal bodies, that they should obey it in the lusts thereof*, Rom. 6. 12, 13. In becoming Christians *they are dead, and crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might*

the market. For ſays he, *I am carnal*, and *ſold under ſin*, v. 14.

That *ſin works* or accompliſhes, and brings on to * outward act and perfection *in him*, *all manner of concupiſcence*, v. 8. For *taking occaſion by the* nakedneſs of the tenth *Commandment*, whereto no puniſhment was expreſly threatned, it *deceived him* into the *cuſtomary commiſſion* of it by that wile, *and thereby ſlew him*, v. 11.

* Κατεργάζεται.

might, not be maintained to live and rule in them, but *deſtroyed, that thenceforward they ſhould not ſerve ſin. For he that is dead is freed from ſin*, v. 6, 7. The Goſpel of Chriſt, or *the law of the ſpirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus*, *hath* not enſlaved, but *freed them from the law of ſin and death*, Rom. 8. 2. So that *ſin now ſhall not have dominion over them, becauſe they are not under the law*, through the weakneſs whereof it tyrannized, *but under* Grace, *Rom.* 6. 14.

That *their body is dead becauſe of ſin*, Rom. 8. 10. And that they *make no proviſion for the fleſh to fulfil* and accompliſh *the luſts* or concupiſcence *thereof*, *Rom.* 13. 14. Becauſe if they ſhould, they would ceaſe to be Sons of God, and heirs of happineſs, and be rendred obnoxious to miſery and death. For the plain declaration of Chriſt's Goſpel concerning the heirs of life and death is this: *If you live after the fleſh* in accompliſhing its luſts, *you ſhall die*; and 'tis only, *if you through the ſpirit*, inſtead of acting and compleating, *do* kill and *mortifie the deeds of the body, that you ſhall live*, Rom. 8. 13.

That

That *the law be found to be unto death*, in discerning himself to be fallen under the curse and condemnation of it, *vers.* 10. For *the motions of sin, which were* incouraged and emboldened by means of the fanfied impunity of *the law, wrought in his members*, which are the seat of their Empire, so far as *to bring forth* damning sins, or *fruit unto death*, v. 5.

That *in his flesh dwells no good thing*, verse 18. For *sin dwells* and *inhabits* in *him*, vers. 17. and that so as to rule and govern, or have all the force of a *law in his members*, v. 23.

That he sins against his own conscience. For *what he doth, that he allows not; but what* in his own mind *he hates* and *disapproves, that he doth*, v. 15, 19.

That *to do good*, although he might wish, or approve it, *he found not*, v. 18.

That *against them there is no* condemning force of any *law*, Gal. 5. 23. For *the law of the spirit of life hath* not left them still enslaved, but *made them free from the law of sin and death* too, Rom. 8. 2. And *being become the servants of God, they have their fruit*, not to sin and death, *but to holiness* at present, *and the end thereof* at length, *everlasting life*, Rom. 6. 22.

That *their bodies*, or fleshly *members are temples of the Holy Ghost*, and sacred places wherein it inhabits; and that *they glorifie God in their Bodies*, as well as in *their Spirits*, seeing *both are Gods*, 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20.

That *they hold faith and a good conscience, without which, of faith* in dangerous times *they would soon make shipwrack*, 1 Tim. 1. 19. And *that they are saved by the answer of a good conscience*, which comforts and applauds, but cannot accuse them, 1 *Pet.* 3. 21.

That *he* only *who doth good is of God*, 3 John 11. and that *there is no condemnation to them, who* do and *walk after the Spirit*, Rom. 8. 1. And that without these *new fruits*, it is in vain to lay any claim to a *new nature*; because as our Saviour says, *if men were the children of Abraham, they would*

would do the works of Abraham, Joh. 8. 39.

That he ſtands in need to cry out, *O wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death,* being as yet not reſcued from it, but labouring under it, v. 25.

That *the body of ſin is already deſtroyed* in them, *that henceforth they ſhould not ſerve ſin,* which the other complains ſo much of, *Rom. 6. 6.* For *they are delivered from the law,* upon occaſion of the weakneſs whereof ſin brought forth in them fruits unto death, *to ſerve now in newneſs of Spirit,* Rom. 7. 5. So that what the weak ineffective law could not do for them, that *the Grace of God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord* hath done, in an effectual deliverance of them, *v.* 25.

So that if we will take the word of S. *Paul,* and of the reſt of the *Apoſtles* in this matter; we muſt needs believe, I conceive, that *regenerate Men,* and *heirs of Heaven,* are not in any wiſe ſuch perſons as are deſcribed in that *ſeventh Chapter* to the *Romans,* there being no agreement or reſemblance at all between them. Their *tempers* and *behaviour* are utterly *inconſiſtent, and as far diſtant as Heaven* and *Hell.* For one *ſerves and fulfills the luſts of his fleſh,* the other *crucifies and ſubdues them*; one *yields his members ſervants unto ſin,* the other *unto righteouſneſs*; one *is made a perfect captive, and ſold under ſin,* the other *is made free from it*; one *is forced to act againſt his conſcience,* the other *always acts according to it*; one *complains of being oppreſſed by the body of death,* the other *rejoiceth in being deliver'd from it*; one *can perform and do no good,* the other *doth all good*; one *brings forth fruit unto death,* the other *to eternal life.*

Theſe with *others* that might be mention'd, are the lines of difference, and the contrary characters of the *perſon* repreſented in the *ſeventh* Chapter to the *Romans,* and the *regenerate Man* deſcrib'd by S. *Paul* himſelf in all his

his *other* Epistles, and in the *following* and *foregoing* Chapters of *this*. By all which it appears, that they are *Descriptions contradictory* and *incompatible*, which cannot at the same time be affirmed of the same Man. And that to give such an account of a *regenerate* Man, as is there set down, would not in all appearance be the way *to describe*, but rather *slanderously to libel* and *revile him.*

If any therefore enquire now how I know that Saint *Paul* doth not speak of *himself* in that *Chapter*, nor of any other *regenerate* Person; but of an *unregenerate* Man, who is yet in the state of *death* and *sin*; he has his Answer *full* and *undeniable* already. I know he *doth* not mean so, because he *cannot* mean so, the things which he says not *bearing* to be so understood. For *that meaning* would make his speech, I conceive, to be no *Apostolical Truth*, but an *open falshood*; it would make S. *Paul inconsistent* with himself, and to *unsay* at *one* time, what he had *said* most *peremptorily* at *another*. It would make him flatly to gain-say all that he has taught elsewhere, yea, even what he had affirm'd almost in the same breath, in the *foregoing* and the *following Chapters*. So that he cannot with Reason be understood of himself, or of any other *regenerate* Person, but must be allowed according to his usual custom in such odious topicks as this was, to speak all in a borrowed disguise, and in the *person of a sinful* and a *lost Man.*

For indeed, to be yet more particular, all that discourse in that *seventh* Chapter, is not meant either of S. *Paul*, or any other *regenerate Christian*; but of a *struggling* and *contending*, although yet *unconquering* and *unregenerate* † *Jew*. For the Apostle is there describing the state, not of a *perfect Debauchee*, nor of a *perfect Saint*, but of a *middle* man. He is one, whose *Conscience* is awaken'd; for *he delights in the Law of God after the inner man* of his mind or reason, *ver.* 22. and when he *doth evil, he doth not allow*, but disapproves of it, *ver.* 15. but yet his *practice* is enslaved; *for to perform what is good he finds not*, ver. 18. *what in his mind he hates, that he doth*, ver. 15. *the law in his members bringing him into captivity to the Law of Sin*, so that *with his flesh*, or in his bodily actions, *he obeys the Law of sin* still, *ver.* 23, 25. He strives something, indeed, but not enough, he is not far from the Kingdom of Heaven, but as yet he is

† ἐν τῷ νόμῳ κ) περὶ τὸν νόμ. πολιτευόμενον ἄνθρωπον ὑπογράφει. Chrysostom, upon the words, *I am carnal*, v. 14.

ſhort of it. He is a ſinner of the *middle* rate, ſuch as I have deſcribed in the laſt *Chapter*: For he is not as yet, either quite hardned in ſin, or perfect in goodneſs; he is offering to go off from ſin, but ſtill it lays hold of him, and keeps him under; he is in the rank of unwilling ſinners, but he is a loſt ſinner ſtill. He is ſomething above the forlorn condition of meer *Nature*, and ſomething below the more perfect inſtitution of *Chriſt*; he is in a middle ſtate between both, under the diſcipline and aſſiſtance of the *Jewiſh Law*, or the *Religion of Moſes*.

And that this is the perſon there characterized, will appear, not only from the *things themſelves* that are ſaid of him, and which I have already noted, (*viz.*) his *Conſcience being awaken'd, but his practice ſtill enſlaved*, which is the very ſtate of *middling ſinners*; but alſo from the whole *order* and *deſign* of that *ſeventh* Chapter.

For the buſineſs, which the Apoſtle drives at in the ſixth ſeventh and eighth Chapters, (to go no farther) of that Epiſtle, as any man who attentively peruſes them may plainly ſee, is this, (*viz.*) *to ſhew the* Jews at Rome *a double Change which they had come under by their becoming Chriſtians. One* was in their *ſubjection*, and the *other* in the conſequent of that, their *ſervice* and *obedience*.

One change he tells them, is in their *ſubjection*; for *now they are not ſubject to, and under the Law of Moſes, but under the Grace and Goſpel of Chriſt*, Chap. 6. verſ. 14, 15.

And upon that change in their *ſubjection*, there is likewiſe another change in their *ſervice*. For *now they ſerve not ſin as they did formerly*, but *they ſerve and obey* God, Chap. 6. verſe 15, 16, 17, 18; and Chap. 7. verſe 4, 5, 6.

And becauſe this ſeems to be a great reflection upon the *Law of Moſes*, as if it *encouraged them in their ſins*, and *helped to make them ſinners*; this latter part, (*viz.*) *their being wrought into change of ſervice by this changing their Maſter and Religion*, he explains more fully.

For to take off all reproach from the *Law*, under which he had affirmed they *ſerved ſin*; he ſhews, that the reaſon why they ſinned under it, was not the *ſinfulneſs* of

of the *Law* it self, for *it is holy, and commands holiness*, Chap. 7. ver. 12. but the *power* of their own *sinful lusts*, which were too strong to be *corrected* and *restrained* by those aids which it offer'd to restrain them, *vers.* 11, 13, ----23.

In the management, and evident proof whereof, he shews *two* things:

One is the *goodness* and *innocence of the Law*, because, so far as they were influenced by it, they were for that which is *good*. For their *Mind* and *Conscience*, wherein the Law was seated, did *approve* of it, and their *heart desir'd* it, *chap.* 7. *vers.* 15, 16, 18, 22.

The other is the *weakness* and *inability*, of that Grace, which was offered in the *Law* to work mens *reformation*, and to make this change in their service and obedience. For *notwithstanding it, they served and obeyed Sin still*, Chap. 7. ver. 15, 19, 21, 23, 25.

Wherein yet to be more *particular*, he shews further, that those *good effects*, which the *Law* was able to work in them, were only in their *mind* and *conscience*, Chap. 7. ver. 15, 18, 22, 23. But that still the Law in the Members prov'd all the while too strong for it, and kept possession of their *life* and *practice*, ver. 15, 17, 18, 21 23, 25.

But then, as for that *change in their service*, which the Law of *Moses* had not strength enough to work in them; he shews that the Gospel and Grace of Christ has wrought it effectually. For now, since they become *subject to him, they had thrown off the service of Sin*, which the Law could not enable them to get quit of, and *had begun to serve and obey him*, Chap. 7. ver. 25. and Chap. 8. ver. 1, 2, 3, 4, *&c.*

This is the Argument which the Apostle pursues, and the way wherein he manages it, as every man will perceive, who will be at the pains to peruse those three Chapters, as I have pointed them out to him. So that as for all the *ineffective striving* and *sinning with regret*, which is so often mentioned in the *seventh* Chapter; it belongs not to the *Apostle* himself, nor to any other *regenerate Christian*, but only to a *middling Sinner* among the *Jews*, who is changed something by *Moses's Law*, but not enough: And who is in the way to become a Child of Grace, although for the present he be a Son of Death and Hell.

This, I say, will appear to be the Person, whom St. *Paul* sets forth in that so much mistaken *Chapter*, to any man who shall fairly consider those three Chapters, observing that help for the understanding of them, which I have already offered.

But because this is a matter of highest importance, and I would not seem to shun any pains which may in probability make for the satisfaction of any, though but *one* single man, concerning this necessity of an active obedience; I will here set down, what I verily take to be the sense of those *three* Chapters, (or so much at least of the *sixth* and *eighth* as makes for the understanding of the *seventh)* in this ensuing Paraphrase. Which I hope will not be altogether unuseful for common Readers, because they will thereby see, what, as I take it, is the Apostle's meaning, in *full* and at *length* here, when as they read it more *contracted* and *involved* in their *Bibles.*

And to take our rise from thence, that being sufficient for our present purpose, at the *fourteenth* Verse of the *sixth* Chapter, thus the Apostle discourses.

Chap. 6. Hereafter now, *you are not* in subjection *under the Law* of *Moses, but under the Grace* and Gospel of Christ.

Verse 15. *But what then? Shall we* serve *sin, because we are not under the Law*, though it cannot conquer it; *but under Grace*, which pardons it? *God forbid* that ever any of us, who are come now under the Gospel which proffers pardon for sins past, should think of refusing it all service for the time to come; and continue still to serve and obey sin, as much or more, than we did under the weak aids of the Law before it came. That we should continue to serve by continuing to obey it, I say, For

16. *Know you not* this, *That to whom you yield your selves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey?* So that there you will be judged to pay your service where you pay your obedience, *whether* that be in the performance *of sin, unto* the purchase of *death*; *or of obedience, unto* the obtaining of *Righteousness.*

17. *But* whatever some licentious Renegado Christians may think, of obeying, and so serving sin, after they have put themselves under subjection to Christ, who proffers

proffers to pardon it for the time past, only that he may thereby encourage them to leave it for the future: Yet *God be thanked*, that you for your parts have quite other Apprehensions. For although indeed *you were* formerly, in your time of Judaism, and Subjection to the Law of *Moses the servants of sin*; *yet* now, since your coming into Subjection under Christ, *ye have*, together with your Subjection, changed your Service also, and have *obeyed from the heart that* New Gospel-*Form of Doctrine, whereunto*, or into the Hands whereof, *ye were delivered*, when you were exempted from all Subjection to the Law. Chap. 6.

Being then, by this Change of Subjection from the Law, under which Sin had Power, to Christ's Gospel, which enables you to destroy it, *made free from* the Service of *sin*; *ye became*, as the Subjects of Christ, so likewise the *Servants of Righteousness*. And for this Change of your Service, together with the Change of your Subjection, there is all the Reason in the World. Verse 18.

Whereof *I* will *speak after the* most moderate expectations, and equitable *manner of men, because of the infirmities of your flesh*, whereby I know you are disabled from making such high Returns as the Reason of the thing calls for. *For* this is the least, the mildest Man would require in this Case, and yet it is all that God exacts of you; *as ye have* formerly, when you were subject to the Law, under which Sin took so great Advantage, *yielding your members Servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity, unto* the bringing forth still of more *iniquity*; *even so* in the same manner *now*, since you are become subject unto Christ, give the same Fruits there of your Subjection, and *yield your members servants to righteousness, unto* the increase of greater *holiness*. 19.

This, as I say, is no more than you did upon your Subjection to the other. *For when you were the servants of sin*, and under Subjection to his Law, *ye were free from* all that Service of *Righteousness*, which God expects of you now upon your Subjection to a better Law. 20.

And as this Change of your Service, together with the Change of your Subjection, is most highly reasonable; so let me tell you withal, it is most beneficial. For when ye were Subject to the Law, and thereby Servants unto Sin; *what fruit had you then*, either in En- 21.

joyment or Expectation, beſides Death and Diſgrace, *in thoſe things* and Services, *whereof you are* moſt juſtly *now aſhamed?* And not only ſo, *for* beſides that one effect of Shame, there is moreover another *end of thoſe things*, and that *is death* too.

22. *But now*, on the other ſide, *being*, by means of your Subjection unto Chriſt, *made free from* the Law and Authority of *ſin, and become*, as it is meet for Subjects, Chap. 6. *ſervants unto God; you have your fruit* at preſent *unto holineſs, and the end thereof* at laſt *everlaſting life.*

23 Verſe. This difference there is, I ſay again, between the Fruits of your former Subjection and Service, and thoſe at preſent. *For the wages of ſin*, to its Subjects and Servants, *is death, but the gift of God* to his, *is eternal life.*

And this Service of God, which gets you right to eternal Life, I muſt ſtill tell you, is owing to your being freed from Subjection to the Law, under which you ſerved Sin, and to your becoming ſubject unto Chriſt.

Chap. 7. Verſe 1. For in the firſt Place, as for your being freed from Subjection to the Law, and being now no longer under it; that is very plain. For, *know you not*, my *Brethren (for I ſpeak to them that know the Law*, or the Nature and Quality of thoſe Laws which give one Perſon Intereſt and power over another) *how that the Law*, when conſidered as a Perſon that hath ſuch Power, *hath dominion over a man* who is under it *as long as he liveth* indeed, or as it liveth in force to bind him, but no longer?

2. A Man's Subjection to a Law, is juſt like that of a Woman to her Husband; where, as we all know, the Subjection ceaſeth, and all the Laws pertaining to it, when her Husband dies whom ſhe was ſubject to. *For the woman which hath an Husband, is bound* indeed *by the Law* of that Subjection *to her Husband, as long as he liveth; but if the Husband be dead, ſhe is* then no longer ſubject, but *looſed from the Law* of Wedlock made in favour *of her Husband*, as ſhe is from that Subjection wherein it was founded.

3. *So then if while her Husband liveth*, during whoſe Life all the Laws of Wedlock belonging to that Subjection are in force, *ſhe be married to another man; ſhe ſhall be* truly *called an Adultereſs*: *But* on the other Side, *if her Husband be dead*, that Subjection, and all the Laws which could oblige her in it, are dead with him; and

ſhe

she is free from the Obligation of *that Law*, which forbid her to marry another upon pain of being accounted an Adulteress; *so that she is no Adulteress* now, that Law being dead which made her so, *though she be married to another Man.* Chap. 7.

And this is just your Case; the Law of *Moses*, which held you in subjection formerly, being dead and abolished now by the Death and Doctrine of Christ; or you being dead to it, which comes to the same thing. *Wherefore my Brethren, ye also*, (as the Woman is to the dead Man the Duties of this Relation living or expiring at the same time on both sides equally) *are become dead to the Law*, which was your former Husband (unto which therefore now you are no longer subject) *by the body* and Sufferings *of Christ* crucified, who has abrogated and (*c*) abolished *Moses*'s Law under which Sin reigned; which abolition of the Law he wrought for this end, *that ye*, by this death of it, being freed from all subjection to it, might now be *married*, and thereby become subject *to another, even to himself, who is raised from the dead* to a state of (*d*) absolute Authority and Dominion over us; to whom, I must tell you, we are espoused for this purpose, that upon becoming his Subjects *we should* be freed from our former sinful service; and agreeable to our present subjection, perform service, or *bring forth fruit unto God.* Verse 4. (*c*) Ephes. 2. 15. Col. 2. 14, 16, 17. (*d*) Matt. 28. 18.

And this alteration of our subjection from the Law to himself, was necessary, as I said, for this altering of our service from sin to righteousness. Which is manifest, from comparing what we were formerly, with what we are at present. *For when* formerly *we were in* subjection to the *Flesh*, or Law of *Moses* under which the Flesh had so great advantage, we generally felt, as they do now who are still under it, that *the motions of sin, which were* occasioned and strengthened by the weakness and inability of the *Law*, which could not restrain them, *did work* such service and obedience to them *in our members* or bodily powers, as *to bring forth fruit unto death.* 5.

But now, upon our becoming subject unto Christ, *we are delivered from* the subjection of *the Law*, whose weakness gave sin so great advantage over us, *that* Law, I say, *being* now *dead* and abolished, *wherein*, whilest we so served sin, *we were held* in subjection; which de- Verse. 6.

Chap. 7. liverance is vouchsafed us, as I said, for this end, *that* being made, not the Law's, but Christ's Subjects now, *we should*, answerably to that *serve in newness of Spirit*, or in such sort as the new Spirit and Grace of his Religion enables us, *and not* as we served formerly under our subjection of the Law, *in the oldness of the letter*, or in those weak and ineffective degrees whereto the helpless Letter of the old Law could assist us.

Verse 7. But upon what I say, of this change of Service from Sin to God (which we have all felt upon our becoming Christians) being an effect of this Change of Subjection from the Law to Christ; some of you 'tis like, may think, that the Law which I affirm we sinned under, is aspersed and reproached by me, and thus object:

(e) τὲ ἐροῦμεν. (e) *What say we then? Is the Law* under which you say we sinned so much, and from which being now delivered, we have ceased to serve Sin, the Cause of Sin to them who live under it? Now to this I must answer, *God forbid* that any Man should either say, or think so. No, we served Sin under the Law, but yet the Law was no Cause of Sin. And both these and all they who live under it feel in themselves, and must acknowledge. To avoid Offence, suppose that I my self were this sinning Subject of the Law; 'tis very true, as I have said, that I do serve sin under it; but is the Law the cause of it? By no means. *Nay*, so far is the Law from causing or encouraging Sin in me, that on the contrary, it points it out to me, and forbids it. *I had not known* what things are *sin, but by the* Help of *the Law* which shews it; *for I had not known lust*, or *concupiscence* for Instance, which is only in the Heart, and not in the outward Action, to be a Sin, *except the Law* of the tenth Commandment *had said* expressly, *Thou shalt not covet.*

8. But for all the Law both shews and prohibits Sin, and so can contribute nothing to produce, but rather to destroy it: Yet I must truly tell you still, That, whereas Sin has other causes more than enow, which are sufficient to produce it; the Law is so weak and imperfect, as not to be able to hinder it. For in this Instance of Concupiscence especially, whereto in the Law there is no express punishment threatned, the sinful Inclinations of our Flesh, which are cause enough of all Sin,

Sin, grow bold, and hearing of no expreſs Threatning from it, will not be reſtrained by it. And by this means the Sin of Concupiſcence *taking occaſion* from the Impunity *of the Commandment*, inſtead of being reſtrained by it, took liberty and preſumed upon it; and ſo without all Fear, wrought and accompliſhed, or brought on to (e) compleat Action and Practice, *in me all manner of Concupiſcence.* And ſeeing the Law only forbid, but could not reſtrain it, it helped on in the End rather to make, and let me ſee my ſelf to be a Sinner, than to deliver me from Sin; *for without the* promulgated *Law*, Sin was almoſt dead being both little in it ſelf, and leſs upon the Conſcience. For the leſs Knowledge there is of the Law, the leſs is there of Sin in tranſgreſſing it, and alſo the leſs Senſe of it. And therefore, as I ſay, as for this Inſtance of Concupiſcence, which I had not known to be a Sin unleſs the Law had told me ſo; without the Law I had neither offended ſo highly in it, nor had ſo great a Senſe of my offence. Chap. 7.

(e) Κατειργάσατο.

And this was found by Experience in the Men of our Nation. For any one of them, who was alive at the promulgation of the Law upon Mount *Sinai*, might ſay: *I was alive* to my thinking, and as to great degrees of that Guilt which I contracted afterwards, *without the Law once*, or before ſuch Time as it was there proclaimed to us: for till then I knew not Luſt to be a Sin, and ſo by reaſon of my Ignorance, neither ſinn'd ſo much in it, nor was ſo ſenſible of it as now I am; *but when the Commandment came*, and was plainly made known to me by *Moſes*; *then Sin*, I ſay, which was only ſhewn and forbid, but could not be reſtrained by it, *revived*, and begun to have the fulneſs of Guilt and Terror in it, *and I*, thenceforward, being warn'd againſt it, and not being able to keep back from it, became liable to that Death which is the Wages of it, and died by it. Verſe 9.

And thus the *Law* or *Commandment*, which was not only holy, and innocent in it ſelf, but moreover intended by God for my good, and *ordained to life*, which it promiſed could I have obeyed it; I notwithſtanding *found to be unto death* to me, becauſe that became my due when I ſinned againſt it. 10.

Not as if the Law can be ſaid to be the Author of Death to me, more than it is of Sin in me: For it was aim'd 11.

Chap. 7. aim'd to deſtroy ſin, which it ſhews and forbids; and to procure life, which it offers and promiſes. But the true cauſe of this effect ſo contrary to its intention, (*viz.*) its producing Sin and Death, when as it was ordained to Holineſs and Life, is its being, as I ſaid before, weak, and unable by all its aids to conquer fully, and reſtrain that Sin, which brings Death upon us, for it cannot ſubdue, but only ſhew and forbid it. And therefore our habitual Luſts finding themſelves too ſtrong for it, burſt through it, and, in ſpite of all its reſtraint, make us commit the one, and ſo become liable to the other. *For* in very deed it is not the Law, which is the cauſe of Death to me, but *Sin* it ſelf, which *taking occaſion* or Advantage *by the* literal and fanſied impunity of the tenth *Commandment*, *deceived me*, through a falſe hope into the commiſſion of it; and by it made me in reality liable to that Death, which is truly the Wages of it, or in a Word, *ſlew me.*

Verſe 12. *Wherefore* notwithſtanding we ſinned, yea, and died alſo during our Subjection under the Law; yet for all that, neither can our Sin, nor our Death be charged upon the Law it ſelf; becauſe, inſtead of Contributing to them, it tends to deſtroy them, by expreſly forbidding the one, and offering to deliver us from the other. And therefore as for this Difficulty that was made at the ſeventh Verſe, againſt my ſaying that we ſerved Sin under the Law, (*viz.*) its following thence that the Law was the cauſe of our Sin and Death; this we ſee is quite taken off, and doth not follow at all. For although we ſinned, yea, and died too under the Law; yet was not the Law the cauſe of theſe, but the ſtrength of our own Luſts. But *the Law is holy* ſtill, and ſo no cauſe of Sin; *and the Commandment* forbidding Sin, and promiſing Life to the Obedient, is not only *holy* and *juſt*, but over and above that good too, and ſo no Cauſe of Death and Suffering.

13. But upon this you will ſay, How *was* it *then*, that *that which is ſo good* in it ſelf, as you ſay the Law is, ſhould be *made* the cauſe of the greateſt evil, even of *Death unto me?* Could it prove ſo to me, if it were not ſo in it ſelf? And to this I anſwer with Abhorrence, *God forbid* that I ſhould ſay the Law is Death. No, this Death, as I have told you, is not the effect of the Law, for it was ordained

ordained to procure Life for me. *But* it was *Sin*, I say again, that was too strong for the Law, which could only forbid, but was not able by all its aids to restrain it; this Sin it was, *that it might appear Sin* indeed, which went on *working* transgression *unto death in me*, by advantage taken over *that* Law *which is good*, although not strong enough to over-power the settled habits of evil. And by this conquest of Sin over the good Law, which was set up as a bar against it, and should have destroy'd it, it appears to be most mischievous. For this comes of it, *that Sin, by* proving too hard for *the Commandment, might* by such prevailing over all that is set against it, be extreamly heightned and aggravated, and *become exceeding sinful.* Chap. 7.

14 Verse. And that the Law should thus be worsted by Sin, is no wonder. *For we know, that although the Law*, which commands, is *spiritual*, to shew and suggest better things; *yet I*, who am to obey, in that state of sensuality and sin, wherein the Law finds me, and out of which it is too weak to rescue me, *am carnal*, so as to serve sin notwithstanding it. Which I am to such a degree, as if I were *sold under sin*, and my actions were as much at its command, as the actions of a Slave bought with money are at the command of his Master. So that although the Law shews me that which is good, and commands me to perform it; yet cannot I obey it, in regard I am under another's power, under the beck of sin.

15. And in very deed, to speak yet more particularly to this business, in the Person I am representing, under the state of Sin and Sensuality, from which the Law alone is too weak to rescue them, the good Law can, and doth produce good effects in the mind and conscience, which is the Throne wherein it is seated; but still the Law of sin, which is seated in the members or executive powers, prevails over it, and engrosseth all our actions: So that the utmost that it can ordinarily do with us, is to make us in our mind to disapprove sin; but when it hath done that, it cannot hinder us in our lives from practising it. And of this the complaints of those Persons are a sufficient proof. *For* who is there among them, for the most part, that is not ready to confess and cry out thus, *that which*, through the prevailing power of my lusts, *I do* in my practice; that, through the power of the Law,

Chap. 7. *I allow not* in my mind and conſcience ; *for what*, being excited by the Law, *I would* do ; *that*, being hindred by ſin, *do I not* ; *but what*, from the Law's prohibiting, in my mind *I hate* and diſapprove ; *that*, from my own luſts forcing and over-powering me, in my actions ſtill *do I.*

Verſe 16. And this by the way, as it is an evident argument of the weakneſs and inability of the Law to reſtrain ſin ; is alſo a clear teſtimony to the holineſs and goodneſs of the Law it ſelf, which ſhews plainly that it is no favourer, or author of Sin, as was objected, *verſ.* 7. Becauſe *if* even *then* when I do ſin, I do not approve of it, but in doing ſo, *I do what I would not* ; *I* thereby *conſent* in my own conſcience *unto the Law*, and acknowledge, by my approving what it commands, *that it is good.* Yea, I ſhew moreover, that all that, which it produces and effects in me, is good alſo. For even when *I* do ſin, ſinning thus againſt my Conſcence, the ſin cannot in any wiſe be charged upon my conſcience where the Law reigns, ſo as that the Law *in* my mind may be ſtiled the cauſe of ſin, as it is *verſ.* 7. but only upon the power of my habitual ſin and fleſhly luſts that reign in my members, which are ſo ſtrong, as that the law of my mind cannot reſtrain them.

17. And *now then* (in this ſtate of ſinning thus with regret, and againſt my conſcience) even when I do ſin, *it is no more I*, (or my mind and conſcience that is governed by the Law, and which may be called my ſelf) *that do it*, ſeeing it diſapproves it ; *but* it is *ſin that dwells in me*, and reigns in my members.

18. It muſt not be charged upon the Law in my mind, I ſay, but upon this inhabiting Sin which rules in my Members. *For I know*, and confeſs freely *that in* that other part of *me*, that is to ſay, *in my fleſh* and members (which for all the Law rules in my mind, doth yet keep poſſeſſion of my practice) *dwells no good thing.* Nay, on the contrary, there dwells ſo much evil, as proves too ſtrong for the good Law, reſtraining all its effects to the approbation of my mind, but not ſuffering it to influence my practice. Which they, as I ſaid, who are in this ſtate, find by ſad experience. *For* ordinarily they feel and muſt confeſs this, that *to will*, upon the account of the Law, *is preſent with me*, *but* then *how to*

per-

perform that which is good, after I have will'd it, that I *find not.* Chap. 7.

For after the Law has done all that it can upon me, this is still true, that *the good, that*, being instructed by the Law, *I would* do; that, being hindred by the prevalence of my lust, *I do not*; *but* as for *the evil, which*, because of the prohibition of the Law, *I would not* do; *that* being over-master'd by my lusts, *I do.* Verse 19.

But now all this while, as I said, *if* what my lusts make me practise, through the Law in my mind I do not approve; but in doing it, *I do that* which *I would not*; then 'tis clear, that my sinning cannot be charged upon the Law, as it is *vers.* 7. because it hinders it as far as it can. It cannot, I say, be attributed to that, for *it is no longer I*, or my mind and conscience, *that do it*; *but* to the power of habitual Sin which the good Law cannot conquer, to that *sin which dwells* and rules *in me*, *i. e.* in my bodily members. 20.

And therefore to sum up all in this state, *I find* another *Law* in my members, opposite to the Law of God in my mind which strives against it, and prevails over it, and makes me practise contrary to what my mind approves. So *that when*, being enclined by God's Law, *I would do good*; then, being over-ruled by the law of sin, I cannot, but *evil is* laid before me and *present with me.* 21.

God's Law, I say, I serve with the mind. *For I delight in the Law of God after the inner man* of my mind and conscience. 22.

But all this while I only approve of it, but no more. For all the effect which it has upon me, is only to create a liking of it in my mind. *But* as for my practise and outward performance, it is under another's power. For *I see another* opposite Law (*viz.*) that of Lust and Sin, which is seated *in my* bodily *members*, not only *warring against the Law of God in my mind*, but conquering also and prevailing over it, *bringing me into captivity*, that absolute sort of subjection and slavery, to practise *the Law of Sin, which is* seated *in my members.* 23.

And since I am so far enslaved to the *Law* of *Lust* and *Sin*, when the Law of God undertakes me, that even that Law it self, which God has appointed for my remedy, is not able to rescue and deliver me: I have too great reason to cry out, *O! wretched man that I am, who* 24.

Chap. 7. *who shall deliver me*, since this Law given me by *Moses* is not able to do it, *from* the slavery and misery of *this body of death*?

Verse 25. This indeed was such Sinners condition under the Law, as shews at once the Law's holiness and goodness, and withal its inability and weakness; because notwithstanding it offer'd some Grace, yet was not that enough, but that during our subjection under it, we commonly serv'd sin still. But now as for that slavish service of sin, which such a bare *Jew*, who has no other help against it but *Moses*'s Law, complains of, and longs to be delivered from; that, as I told you at first, we Christians, through the surpassing Grace of Christ's Gospel, are delivered from, as he may be by turning Christian. So that to such a complaining *Jew* as I have here personated, I *Paul* an Apostle of Jesus Christ can readily make answer. Alter your subjection, and you shall alter your service too; for in becoming subject unto Christ instead of the Law, you shall become servants of God instead of serving sin. *I thank God* there is a way now in Christ for such deliverance, or, as it is read by some * Copies, *the Grace of God* which comes *through Jesus Christ our Lord* shall deliver you, although the Law cou'd not which came by *Moses*. But without this Grace, I must still tell you, that the Law it self will not generally have any such effect upon you; seeing, as I said, it will only awaken your Conscience, but not reform your Practice. *So then*, to shut up this Discourse, this you must still conclude upon, that whilst you continue subject to the Law, you will serve sin in your practise, however you may disapprove it in your Minds. For *I my self*, or *the* † *same I* in that state under the Law, who *with the mind*, as has been often observed, *serve*, in approving *the Law of God*; do *yet with the flesh*, so long as it has nothing else but the Law to restrain it, serve, in practising *the Law of Sin*.

* *In exemp. Clarom.* 'tis not εὐχαριστῶ τῷ Θεῷ, but χάρις τῷ Θεῷ, which reading is also follow'd by the old Latin Version.

† αὐτὸς ἐγώ.

Chap. 8. 1 Verse. But to return to what I said, *vers.* 5, 6. of the last Chapter, from whence we have hitherto diverted to answer this Objection: I say, having by this passage from subjection to the Law, to subjection unto Christ upon the Law's being abolished, changed our service together with our subjection, and become servants now, not unto sin, but unto Christ. All we Christians are safe from

from that *Death*, which the *Law of the members brought forth fruit* to, (*Chap.* 7. *Verſ.* 5.) and have right to that *Eternal Life*, which as I ſaid, is the gift of God to all his ſervants, (*Chap.* 6. *Verſe* 22, 23.) So that what reaſon ſoever ſuch a poor *Jew* under the Law, who ſerves and obeys Sin, may have to cry out of the body of Death: Yet we Chriſtians, who began to ſerve God upon our becoming ſubject unto Chriſt, may comfort our ſelves to ſee that we are delivered from it. And therefore whatever there be to ſuch a ſtriving, but yet unconquering Jew, *there is now no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus*'s Religion, becauſe they are ſuch who have changed their ſervice together with their ſubjection, and *walk not* now *after the Fleſh*, as they did formerly whileſt the Law held them in ſubjection, *but after the Spirit.* Chap. 8.

This change of ſervice, I ſay, is wrought in all true Chriſtians by the Law of Chriſt, although it could not generally be wrought in ſuch regenerate *Jews* by the bare Law of *Moſes*. *For the Law* and power of the *Spirit of life*, which is given to us in *Chriſt Jeſus*, and is expreſly promiſed in his * Religion, though it were not in the Law of *Moſes*; that enabling Spirit, I ſay, *hath made me* Chriſtian *free from the* ſo often mentioned *Law of Sin*, and from the puniſhment of it, *Death.* Verſe 2. * Luke 11. 13.

For what the Law of Moſes could not do towards our deliverance from the ſervice of ſin, *in that it was* too weak *thro'* the over-powering wickedneſs of the Law of Luſt in the *Fleſh*; even that hath God done in *ſending his own Son* Jeſus Chriſt *in the likeneſs of ſinful Fleſh, and* in making him † *a Sacrifice for Sin*, that in his death he might found his own Religion, whereby he hath condemned and deſtroyed, what the Law of *Moſes* was overcome by, *viz.* the Law of *ſin* ſeated in the *Fleſh*. 3. † περὶ ἁμαρτίας.

So that by the help of Chriſt's Law perfecting what the Law of *Moſes* wanted, *the righteouſneſs* which was ſhewn to us and required of us in the Book *of the Law* of *Moſes*, *might be* performed and *fulfilled in us* Chriſtians, although it was not in ſuch bare ſtruggling Jews, becauſe we are ſuch, who being Chriſt's Subjects, muſt be his Servants likewiſe, and in our works and practice *walk not after the* luſts of *the Fleſh*, *but after* the motions of *the Spirit.* 4.

Thus

Thus have I given a Paraphraſe, unto this *involved*, and to much *miſtaken* Chapter. Wherein I have *la gely*, and as I hope *truly* repreſented the Apoſtle's *meaning*, his *deſign* and *manner* of arguing in this place. In all which, we ſee he intends not at all to give a Character of *himſelf*, or of any other *regenerate* Man, but only of a *middling* Sinner, who ſins againſt his Conſcience, and tranſgreſſes with Reluctance. Which Tranſgreſſor of a middle rank, he particularly repreſents under the perſon of an *awaked*, but as yet *unregenerate Jew*; who was one on whom the Law of *Moſes* had wrought ſome change, but could not work enough; being able only to *awaken his Conſcience*, but not to *reform his Practice*.

So that all that is there ſaid in that ſeventh Chapter, of *willing* and not *performing*, &c. only ſets off the *weakneſs* and *imperfection* of the *Law of Moſes*, as to the making awaken'd Sinners *compleatly obedient*; and the *perfection*, as to this particular of the law of Chriſt.

The Law of *Moſes* was unable to work a general reformation in ſuch Perſons, by reaſon of ſeveral defects, *two* whereof I ſhall particularly mention, which in the Religion of Chriſt are fully ſupplied; and they are the *great motive* to all *obedience*, *eternal life*, and the *great encouragement* of all *endeavour*, *the promiſe of the Spirit*.

Eternal life, are words never heard of in all *Moſes's Law*. Indeed the good people under it, had all ſome rude thoughts and *confuſed expectations* of it; but the *Law* it ſelf did no where *clearly*, and *expreſly propoſe* it. Whereof this may ſerve for a *probable proof*, becauſe a *whole Sect* among them, the *Sadducees* I mean, did *flatly deny* it; and this for an *undeniable argument*, becauſe thoſe very * *places* of the Law, which are brought to *confirm* it by thoſe Jewiſh Doctors who are moſt for it, are in all appearance ſo remote from it. Nay, even our Saviour himſelf, when he goes to prove it againſt the *Sadducees* out of the Books of *Moſes*, can find no other Teſtimonies for it, than ſuch as are fetched about to ſpeak it by art, and brought to it by conſequence, *Luke* 20. 37, 38. So

* Such as *Deut.* 14. 1, 2. *Ye are the Children of the Lord our God, ye ſhall not cut your ſelves for the dead.* Which ſay they, were rather to be done for that reaſon of their being God's Children and a King's Son, were it not for the bleſſed immortality of the departed Soul, which this reaſon ſuggeſts to them. Such alſo are *Deut.* 32. 39, 47. *Deut.* 4. 4, *&c.* All which muſt be brought about to ſpeak it by Rabbinical Art and unwonted fetch of conſequence. See *Witneſs to Chriſt.* par. 2. chap. 13.

So that well might Saint *Paul* say, in triumph over all other Religions in the World, That *Life and immortality were brought to light by the Gospel*, 2 Tim. 1. 10. And in the comparison of that *Covenant* which came by *Moses*, with that *other* which came by *Christ*; to affirm, that the *Covenant which came by Christ*, was *the bringing in of a better hope*, Heb. 7. 19. and a *better Covenant*, for this reason, because *it was established upon better promises*, Heb. 8. 6.

And then as for the *promise of the Spirit* to enable men to do what was required of them; of that *Moses* made no mention. *By his Law*, as S. *Paul* says, was *the knowledge of sin*, Rom. 3. 20. It shewed men what they should do, and denounced a * *Curse* upon them if they failed to do it: but it stopt there, and went not on to promise any inward Grace and Help, that might enable them to be as good as it required them. No, the promise of that was reserved to another dispensation, and to be the *hope* of a *better Covenant*; it was not to come by *Moses*, but by *Christ*; nor to be an express Article of the *Law*, but of the *Gospel*. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law*, saith the Apostle, *that* now being under the Gospel, *we might receive the promise of the Spirit*, which comes not by the Law of *Moses* but *through* the *Faith* of Christ, *Gal.* 3. 13, 14. The *Law* by its prohibition, made several actions to be sinful, it shewed us what was sin, and it threatned the *curse* to it; but that was all that it did, towards the extirpation of it; for, as for any *inward strength* and ability to overcome it, it offered none, but left us there to our own selves. And because he was too *strong* for us, and had got possession of our *Bodies* and *executive Powers*, insomuch that we were quite *enslaved* to it, and as it were *sold under* it: therefore the Law, by making more things sinful through its *prohibition*, and not *strengthning us* against sin through *spiritual assistance*, instead of *lessening* the Empire of sin, proved in the end to *encrease* it. For our lusts not being restrained by it, and more of them becoming sinful by being prohibited; *when the Law entred*, as S. *Paul* says, *the offence did more abound*, Rom. 5. 20. and the Law became, not the bane and overthrow of sin, but by making its services more numerous, it was rather, as the

* *Gal.* 3. 10.

same Apostle says, *the strength of it*, 1 Cor. 15. 15. And forasmuch as the Law did only thus outwardly shew and reveal sin to our eyes, but brought along with it nothing of inward Grace and Assistance to help us against it; therefore is it call'd a *Letter without us*, opposite to the Grace of the Gospel, which is an *enlivening Spirit* within. And since it did nothing more but outwardly shew and threaten sin, but did not inwardly assist and rescue us from it; it served only to condemn us for what we did, from the doing whereof it brought no inward Grace to hinder us; and so proved the *ministration of Death* and *Condemnation*, not of *Life* and *Pardon*. All which is plainly affirmed of it, in the *third* Chapter of the *second* Epistle to the *Corinthians*. God, says S. *Paul*, *hath made us* Apostles, *ministers of the New* *διαθήκης. *Testament*, * or *Covenant*, *not of the* external *Letter* only, as *Moses* and the Ministers of the Law were; *but of the* internal *Spirit* also. *For the Letter* or old Law shews sin, and curses Men upon the breach of that which they cannot keep, and thereby *kills* them: *but the Spirit* or *new Law* enables them to do what it commands, and thereby *giveth* right to *live*, which is the mercy that it promises. That was *the ministration of condemnation*; for it shewed Men the curse, which it did not enable them to shun: This is *the ministration of justification* and *righteousness*, which it both promises, and enables them to attain to, *ver.* 6, 7, 8, 9.

'Tis very true indeed, that several of the *Jews* themselves under the *Law of Moses*, had really such assistances of *God's Spirit*, as enabled them to *do*, as well as to *know* what was required of them. For *David* in all his life and behaviour was *a man after God's own heart*, 1 Sam. 13. 13. *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth*, as to their *walking in all the Commandments of the Lord*, *were blameless*, Luke 1. 9. S. *Paul had lived to that day in all good Conscience towards God and towards men*, Acts 23. 1. and 24. 16. And the Case was the same in all times with a number of other *honest* and *godly Jews*.

But then this assistance which they enjoyed, was no *Article* of their *Law*; although God afforded it, yet had their Law no where promised it, nor was he bound to it by the *Mosaical Covenant*. For in very truth, all this *inward Spirit* which was vouchsafed to them, was reached

reached out, not by vertue of the *Covenant of the Law*, but of the *Covenant of Grace*. For the *Covenant of Grace* was not *first* made with the World when Christ came into it, but was established long before with *Adam*, Gen. 3. 15. and after that confirmed again with *Abraham*, and all his *Seed* after him, *Gen.* 12. 3. *Gal.* 3. 8, 17. So that under *it*, as well as under *Moses*, all the *Jews* lived; and by the *gracious* terms and assisting *Spirit* of it, all the righteous people, who have been since the beginning of the World, were reformed and justified. It being, as S. *Paul* says, *by Faith*, which is the righteousness of the second Covenant, that *the Elders*, who lived before the Law, *obtained a good report*, Heb. 11. 2. and that the *Jews* who lived under it, *were* delivered and *justified from all things, from which they could* * *not be justified* by any vertue of the *Law of Moses*. Acts 13. 39. And therefore that which the Apostle affirms of the defectiveness of the Mosaick Law, *viz*, *its having no promise of the Spirit to enable men to do what it commanded*, is true still. For the Law did not promise it, although several, both *before*, and *under* the Law, enjoyed it; but they who had the benefit of it, received it, not from the *Covenant of the Law*, but from the *Covenant of Grace* and *the Gospel*, which has been more or less on foot through all times, ever since the World began. * Gal. 3. 9, 10, 11, 12.

And in this *Covenant*, since Christ has given us the last Edition and Perfection of it, *both* these great defects of the *Mosaick* Law, which rendred it so unable to work this entire reformation and obedience, are fully supplied. For in every Passage of Christ's Gospel, what is so legible, as the *promise of eternal life*? The joys of *Heaven* are as much insisted on by *Christ*, as the delights of *Canaan* were by *Moses*. And then as for the other *promise*, viz. that of *the Spirit*; it is now as plainly revealed, as words can make it. For we need not to *guess* at it by *signs*, or to *presume* it from *Probabilities*, or to *believe* it upon *Syllogism* and *Consequence*: But Christ has *spoke* out, so as to be understood by every capacity, *----God will give the holy Spirit to them that ask him.* Luke 11. 13.

Now because the Law of *Moses* laboured under these *two* great defects, which are happily supplied by the Gospel of Christ, by reason whereof it was very una-

ble to effect that reformation of the World which was neceſſary; therefore doth the Apoſtle, in ſeveral places, ſpeak very meanly of it, as of a weak and *ineffective* Inſtrument. He affirms plainly, and proves alſo, That it neither *could*, nor *did* make Men throughly good; and therefore God, who had made ſome obſcure Revelations thereof before, was forced in the fulneſs of time clearly to make *known*, and, in Chriſt's death, to *eſtabliſh* a *better*. *If there had been a Law given* by *Moſes*, *which could have given life*, *then*, ſaith he, *verily righteouſneſs ſhould* not have needed to be ſought by another Covenant, but *have been by the Law*. *But* this we ſee it could not, for *the Scripture hath concluded all* thoſe, who lived under it, *to be* ſtill *under* the dominion of *ſin*, *that* ſo, ſince the Law of *Moſes* could not do it, *the promiſe* of eternal life, of the Spirit, and of other things which we have *by the faith of Jeſus Chriſt*, *might be given* to work and effect it *to thoſe that believe*, Gal. 3. 21, 22.

Something indeed the Law did towards it, for it armed their *conſciences* againſt ſin, ſo that they could not take their full ſwing, and tranſgreſs without all fear and remorſe. And this was ſome reſtraint, and kept them from being ſo ill by far as otherwiſe they would have been, although it was not able to make them ſo good as they ſhould be. And to lay this hank upon ſin, and to check it in ſome meaſure, till ſuch time as the Goſpel ſhould be more clearly revealed to ſubdue it perfectly was that very end for which the Law was at firſt given, and whereto ſo long as it was in force, it ſerved. *Wherefore*, ſaith he, *ſerveth the Law* of *Moſes*? *It was added* to the rude draught of the Goſpel-Covenant made with *Abraham becauſe of* the *tranſgreſſions* of men, which grew very high, that it might in ſome degree reſtrain them, *till* Jeſus Chriſt *the ſeed* of *Abraham ſhould come*, *to whom*, as to the head and in behalf of his Church, *the promiſe* of ſuch Grace as would reſtrain it fully, *was made*. *And* to fit it the more for imprinting an awe upon peoples Conſciences, whereby it might lay this reſtraint upon Sin, *it was ordained* at the firſt giving of it, by terrible fire and thunderings, made by the *Angels*, which were ſo dreadful, that the People deſired of God that thoſe formidable Angels might be no more employed in delivering it to them, but that it might be put

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into the hands of another Mediator, (viz.) Moses, who was a Man like unto themselves, *Gal.* 3. 19.

But although this Restraint upon Sin were something, yet was it far from sufficient; so that still it is true of *the Law* of *Moses*, that notwithstanding it could begin, yet it could finish and *make nothing* * *perfect*; *but* that it was *the bringing in of a better hope* than was warranted by the Law, which should *do* that, *Heb.* 7. 19. And as for this Imperfection and Faultiness, which the Apostle imputes to the *first Covenant* or *Law of Moses* in these, and other Places; it is nothing more, as he observes, than God himself has charged upon it, when he speaks of establishing a better instead of it. *For if the first Covenant* by Moses *had been faultless*, and void of Imperfection, *then should no place have been sought for* the Introduction of *the second*, which it is plain there was. *For finding fault with them* for their Breach of the first Covenant, *he saith* (in Jer. 31. 31.) *the days come when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel*, such as shall make *me* to be for ever *unto them a God*; and enable *them to be unto me* an obedient *People*, Heb. 8. 7, 8, 9, 10. *Gal. 4. 9.

Now this *Inability* of the Law of *Moses* to work a compleat Conquest over Sin, and a thorow Reformation, which the Apostle affirms so clearly in these *other* places, he sets out more *largely* and *particularly* in that *seventh* Chapter to the *Romans*. For from the Beginning of this Discourse, which I have taken at the 14th *Verse* of the 6th *Chapter*, to the end of it at the 5th *Verse* of the 8th; this Weakness and Inability of the Law, is that still which is every where endeavoured to be made out, and which returns upon us as the Conclusion and Inference from every Argument. *Sin must not have dominion over you*, saith he, *because you are not under the Law*, where is the place of its reigning, *but under* the *Grace* of Christ, at the 14th *Verse* of the 6th *Chapter*. And in the 7th it is taken notice of at every turn, *When you were in the flesh* (or under the Law, which, from its consisting so much of *Carnal Ordinances*, and giving the *flesh* so much *advantage*, is called *flesh*, Galat. 3. 3.) *the motions of sin, which were* encouraged *by the* Weakness of the *Law*, *brought forth fruit unto death*; *but now being delivered from the* weak *Law*, *you serve in newness*

of spirit, not as you did then, *in the oldness of the letter*, v. 5, 6. *Sin taking occasion* or advantage over *the* weak *Commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence*, vers. 8. *When the* weak *Commandment came, sin revived, and I died*, vers. 9. *Sin taking occasion*, or Advantage *by the Commandment, slew me*, verse 11. by which prevailing over the Commandment, it appears to be *exceeding sinful*, verse 13. And at the end of the Discourse at the eighth *Chapter*, we are told again of the *Law* of *Moses being weak through* the conquering Power of *the flesh*, which made it necessary for *God to send his own Son* with a better Law, which was strong enough to rescue us out of the Dominion of it, *verse* 3, 4.

So that upon the whole matter it plainly appears, that all that is said in that seventh *Chapter*, of *willing*, but *not doing*, of *sinning against conscience*; and *transgressing with regret*; doth not at all set forth the *saveable state* of *a true Christian* under the *Gospel* of *Christ*, but only the state of a *middling Sinner*, of a *lost Jew*, who only struggles but cannot conquer, being yet under the Weakness and Imperfection of the *Mosaick Law*.

Nay I add further, so far is any Man, who continues *to work and act his Sin*, from having any real Grounds of *hope*, and encouragement from *this place* in so doing; that in very Deed, if he rightly consider it, it will possess him with the quite contrary. It holds out to him a Sentence of Death, and shews him plainly the absolute Necessity, not only of a *willing*, but also of a *working* Obedience. For the Man who *disobeys* thus *unwillingly*, and *sins with regret*, is so far from being in a state of *Life* and *Salvation* notwithstanding his Sins, that he is here expressly said, to be *undone* and *slain* by them. *The motions of sin under the Law, bring forth fruit unto death*, verse 5. *when sin revived by the coming of the Commandment, I died*, verse 9. *The Commandment which was ordained unto life*, I on the contrary, *found to be unto death*, verse 10. *Sin taking occasion* and Advantage *by the Commandment, slew me*, verse 11. *Sin wrought death in me by that* Law, *which is good*, verse 13. *O! wretched man that I am*, by reason of this subjection unto Sin, *who shall deliver me from this body of* Sin and *Death?* verse 24.

But on the other side, if we would belong to Christ, and appear such Servants as he will own and reward at last; we are taught in this very Place, that we must *not be worsted by sin*, but *overcome* it; that we must *not work evil*, but *righteousness*; that we must not *walk after* those *sinful Lusts* which are seated *in the flesh*, but *after the Law of God* which is enthroned in the *Spirit*. *Sin shall not have dominion over you, if you are under Grace*, Chapter 6. 14. *Now yield your members servants unto righteousness*, verse 19. *you are* become subject, and as it were *married to Christ, that you should bring forth fruit to God*, Chap. 7. verse 4. *Now being delivered from the Law, we must serve*, not Sin, as we did under it, but God *in newness of Spirit*, verse 6. *The Grace of God through Jesus Christ*, hath delivered me *from this body of Death*, verse 24, 25. *The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*, when I became truly and acceptably Christian, *hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death*, Chap. 8. verse 2. *So that the righteousness of the Law*, which it was not able to work in me, is now, by means of the Gospel, *wrought and fulfilled in me*; for since I came under it, I am one *who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit*, verse 4.

So that all the while we see, this is a Truth most sure and steadfast, which S. *Paul* is so far from *opposing* in this *seventh* Chapter to the *Romans*, that in reality he *avers* and *confirms* it, (*viz.*) that *if we do commit sin and work iniquity, it will not excuse us to say that we did it unwillingly*. The *regret* in sinning may be allowed, as was shewn in the *last* Chapter, to *lessen* our *crime*, and thereby to abate our *punishment*; but that is all which it can do, for it cannot *quite* exempt us from it.

And thus at last we see, that this *fourth* Ground, of shifting off the necessity of this *service with our actions*, (viz.) our *hope of being saved at the last day, although we have not obeyed in our works, but have wrought disobedience, because when we did so, it was with reluctance and unwillingness*, is no less delusive than all the *former* are. It will fail any Man who trusts to it, and if he will not see it before, make him know the falseness of it, when it is too late to rectifie and amend it.

As for all those Foundations thereof, whereupon Men build their Hopes of a happy Sentence, without

ever obeying with their *ſtrength or bodily powers*, viz.) the Conceit of being ſaved for *Orthodox Opinions*, for *ineffective deſires*, for *never tranſgreſſing but through a ſtrong temptation*, or *with an unwilling mind*: They are all falſe Grounds, Snares of Death, and Inlets to Damnation.

But as ever we expect that our Obedience ſhould avail us unto *Pardon* and *Life*, we muſt obey with our *Strength* or *bodily Powers*, as well as with our *Wills*, our *Paſſions*, and our *Underſtandings*. If we would have God at the laſt Day to *approve* our *Service*, and to *reward* and *juſtifie* our *Obedience*, this, and nothing leſs than this, muſt be done towards it. We muſt not only *deſire*, but *do*; it is not enough to *will* and *approve*, but we muſt *work* and *practiſe* what is commanded us. We muſt not barely think right in our *Minds*, or *deſire* with our *Affections*, or *chuſe* with our *Wills*; but, as the *Perfection* and *Crown* of all, we muſt put to our *Strength* and *executive Powers*, and *work* the Will of God in our Lives and Actions. Without this, if we have *Life* and *Opportunity*, all other things will ſignifie nothing. For *it is he who doth good*, ſaith S. *John*, who will be looked upon to be *of God*, 3 John 11. *Little Children*, ſaith the ſame Apoſtle, *let no man deceive ye*, for it is only *he who* * *doth righteouſneſs*, who in God's Judgment is *righteous*, 1 John 3. 7. It is this Service of our *Strength* or *bodily Powers*, in our outward Works and Operations, which makes up our Duty, and ſecures our Reward: *Bleſſed are they that do his Commandments*, for they only *have right to* the great Reward, *the Tree of Life*, Rev. 22. 14.

* 1 John 2. 17, 29.

But on the other ſide, if we *do evil*, and *work iniquity*, no ſervice of our other Faculties can ſtand us in any ſtead, but in God's account we ſhall be eſteemed *wicked Wretches*, *Children of Wrath*, and *Heirs of Deſtruction*. For the Words of our Saviour Chriſt himſelf, who is to judge of it, are *vehement* and *plain*. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, whoſoever committeth ſin is the ſervant of ſin*, John 8. 34. *He who commits ſin is of the Devil, for whoſoever doth not righteouſneſs is not of God, but a Child of the Devil*, 1 John 3. 8, 10. And as this *working Wickedneſs*, howſoever we are againſt it in our *Thoughts* and *Deſires*, makes us, in God's Account, *Sons of Sin* and *Diſobedience*; ſo will it be ſure to render us

withal *Children of Wrath* and *Destruction. If you live after the flesh*, saith S. *Paul*, *you shall die*, Rom. 8. 13. And whatever Men think in their *Minds*, or desire in their *Hearts*, or profess in their *Words* to the contrary; if for all that they have sinned impenitently in their Actions, Christ has told them plainly that he will pronounce, when he comes to sit as their Judge,---*Depart from me all ye that work iniquity*, Mat. 7. 23.

As for this fourth Faculty therefore, our *Strength* or *bodily Powers*, in outward Works and Operations; it is one necessary Ingredient of an *entire* Obedience. The Service of our Works is indispensibly required to our Pardon and Happiness, as well as the Service of our Minds, our Wills, and our Affections; so that as ever we hope to live, our obedient Thoughts and Desires, must end in an obedient Practice.

And thus at last we see, what those *Powers* or *Faculties* are, whose Concurrence in God's Service is necessary to make up an *entire* Obedience. We must obey all the *particular* Laws which are recounted in the *former* Book, with our *whole* Man, both with our *Minds*, and *Souls*, and *Hearts*, and *Strength*: All these several Powers must unite in God's Service, before it will be *upright* and *compleat*, such as at present his Law requires, and such as at the last Day he will accept of.

CHAP. V.

Of the Second sort of Integrity, an Integrity of Times and Seasons.

BUT besides the Integrity of our *Powers* and *Faculties*, or the *Integrity of the Subject*, whereof I have discoursed hitherto; there is *a second* sort of Integrity, which is plainly necessary to make our Obedience available to our Salvation at the last Day; and that is an *Integrity of Seasons and Opportunities*, or our obeying the fore-mentioned Laws, not *now*, and *then*, but at *all Times*.

We

We must not think to please God by an Obedience that comes, and goes by *fits*; or by serving him only at such times, as we are in *humour*, or have no *Temptation* to the contrary. But our Service of him must be *constant* and *uniform*, we must obey him at *all* times, and wilfully transgress in *none*. For although all other things have their proper Season, yet Sin has not; it is *always* forbidden, and *always* threatned; so that *whensoever* we commit it it puts us under the Curse, and makes us liable to Death and Hell.

Some indeed there are who parcel out their Time, and divide it betwixt *God* and their *Sins*. They observe a *constant Course* of *Transgressing* and *Repenting* of *Sin* and *Sorrow*. For they are always won when they are tempted, and they are always sorrowful when they have none. They are all holy Purpose, and good Resolution before they are tryed; but when the Temptation comes, they can make but a poor Resistance; for all their good Thoughts quickly vanish, and they are taken. They are never constant, nor all of a piece, either in pious purposing, or in well doing; but still keep on in an uninterrupted Vicissitude and Succession of Works of Obedience and of Sin.

Others again there are, who act more agreeably to themselves, and, whilst they are for God, are more *constant* in their Obedience; who yet *fall* off at *last*, and *sin* against him for *altogether*. For either they grow *faint* and *weary*, by the *tediousness* and *length* of their *Journey*; or they are turned out of the way, by some great *Difficulties*; or drawn aside, by the *importunate Allurements* of some Temptations: And when once, by any of these Ways, they are put beside their Duty, they turn their Backs *thenceforward* upon God, and never more obey him. They are seduced by *ill Company*, or drawn away by *Interest*, or frightned by *Persecution*; and from that Time their Care slackens, and their Lusts encrease, and grow too hard for Grace and the Gospel. And thus, what from Inducements from *within*, and what from Occasions from *without*, they are quite cut off from the Service of God and Religion, and give themselves up to serve their Lusts for altogether, and to an uninterrupted Obedience of Sin.

But

But now, as for such a *broken* service and obedience as this, God will by no means accept of it, nor shall any man be ever the better by it. For when Christ comes to Judgment, he will pass Sentence upon men according to what they are *then*, and not according to what they have been *formerly*. *If the righteous man turn away from his righteousness*, saith *Ezekiel*, *and commit iniquity, and do according to all that the wicked man doth, shall he live?* No, by no means. *For all his righteousness that he hath done* formerly *shall not be mentioned, but in his trespass that he hath since trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned; in them shall he die*, Ezek. 18. 24. It is only *if you continue in my Word*, saith our Saviour, that *you are my Disciples indeed*, John 8. 31. You must persevere in obedience, if you expect to have the reward of it. For *he* only *who endures to the end shall be saved*, Mat. 10. 22. and none but *they who by PATIENT CONTINUANCE in well doing seek for Glory and Immortality*, shall inherit *eternal life*, Rom. 2. 6, 7. Perseverance is the indispensible condition of bliss; *Be thou faithful unto death*, and then, saith Christ, *I will give thee a Crown of life*, Rev. 2. 10.

But as for all those who fall off from a good course, and turn *Apostates* from obedience; their case is desperate, and their condition extreamly damnable. For they grow wicked to the highest degree, and their state is almost irrecoverable. They have, by their continued rebellion and provocations, in spight of all the suggestions of God's Grace, and the checks of their own Conscience, not only *grieved*, but even *quenched* the Spirit of God. So that God, for the most part, leaves them to themselves, and seeks no further to reduce them. For if men are *idle*, and will *not use* it; and much more if they scornfully cast it from them, and *reject* it; Christ has told us plainly, that the *Grace which* any one *hath, shall be taken from him*, Matth. 25. 29. And when once God and his good Spirit, have deserted them, they are under nothing but an unbridled lust, and run on without all restraint, into an exorbitant pitch of wickedness.

And this any man may easily observe in the world. For who is usually so *evil*, as the *backsliding* Sinner? Who is ordinarily so *irrecoverable*, as the *Apostate* Saint?

They

They are quite loſt to all goodneſs, and ſin beyond all bounds and paſt all retrieve. No Creatures in the World were ever ſo much out of all capacity to be reſtored to Heaven, as thoſe Angels that fell from it; and no men on Earth, are ſo hardly reclaimed from a wicked to a holy life, as they who once knew what it was, and yet utterly renounced it. For *God*, for the moſt part lets them alone to enjoy their own choice, and to go on in their own way; and the *good Spirit*, which has been almoſt quenched by them, contends no more with them, nor acts any more upon them. They have trampled already upon all ſpiritual aids, and benumb'd and ſilenced their own Conſciences, and quite hardened themſelves in their wickedneſs; ſo that now they have nothing to hinder them, but to advance to work all manner of ſin with greedineſs and wantonneſs, and thereby fall under the ſevereſt curſe, that can be met with in Hell and Damnation.

And as for this progreſs of all Renegado Saints and revolting Sinners, both in ſin, and alſo in ſuffering; the Scripture is expreſs and plain, *When the unclean Spirit, which is* once *gone out of a man, returns into him again*, ſays our Saviour, *he taketh unto himſelf ſeven other Spirits*, which are *more wicked* than he himſelf is, *and they enter in, and dwell there: and the laſt ſtate of that man is* made *worſe* in all reſpects by this means, *than the firſt*, Mat. 12. 43, 44, 45. The man becomes a greater Sinner, and a greater Sufferer, than otherwiſe he ever would have been. *For if after men have one eſcaped the pollution of the World, through the knowledge of Chriſt's* Goſpel, *they are again entangled therein, and overcome* by it; then *is the latter end worſe with them than the beginning. For it had* really *been* by much *the better for them, not to have known the way of righteouſneſs* at all, *than, after they* had *known* and walked in it, to put ſuch a ſlur upon it, and to revolt and *turn from the holy Commandment*, which was *delivered unto them*, and for ſome time embraced by them, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 21.

As for an obedience then which goes but half way, and breaks off before it it has got to the end; ſo far is it from availing us unto pardon and life, that in very deed it renders our preſent caſe more deſperate, and our future puniſhment more inſupportable.

But

But that obedience, which God will accept, and in which alone we may safely place our confidence; must be, as of our *whole man*, so of our *whole time* likewise. We must persevere in it through all Seasons, and take care both to live and die in it: For our reward will be dispensed out to us, according to the nature of our Service at the time of Payment, and *he* only, as our Saviour says, *that endureth to the end shall be saved*, Matt. 10. 22.

CHAP. I.

Of the third sort of Integrity, viz. *that of the Object*; *or of Obedience to all the particular Laws and parts of Duty.*

BUT to render our service perfectly *intire* and completly *upright* it is not enough that there be an *integrity of the Subject*, by our obeying with all our powers; or an *integrity of Time*, by our obeying in all Seasons; of which *two* I have discoursed hitherto: but it is further necessary, that there be an *integrity of the Object* also; or that what we do thus obey, with our *whole man*, and our *whole time*, be nothing less than *all the particular Laws of Duty and instances of Obedience*; nothing under the *whole will of God*.

We must not (*a*) pick and chuse in the doing of our Duty, for if we do not obey *all*, we obey not (*b*) right in any. Because *all* the Laws of God are bound upon us by the same power, and enjoined by the same Authority; so that if we fulfil any *one* upon this account, of *his having required it*, the same reason holds for our fulfilling *all* the rest.

(a) *Neq; est justa causatio cur præferantur aliqua, ubi facienda sunt omnia.* Sal. de Prov. l. 3. p. 80. Ed. Oxon. (b) *Si pro arbitrio suo Servi Dominis obtemperant, ne in iis quidem in quibus obtemperaverint, obsequuntur. Quando enim Servus, ex Domini jussis ea facit tantummodo, quæ vult facere; jam non Dominicam implet voluntatem, sed suam*, Id. p. 79.

This indeed is very hardly believed, because it is so hard to practise. For almost every man has some sin

or

or other, which he can as well die as part with: It has got his heart, and is become the Master of his affections; and since he loves it so dearly, he hopes that God will bear with it too. He will part with any thing else for God's sake, and not stick at any other service, nor repine at any other imposition; all that he craves, is only to be tolerated in his Darling Lust, and to be allowed to serve him, without *cutting* off what is as useful as his *right hand*, or *pulling* out what is as dear to him as his own *right-eye*, to please him.

And when men are thus desirous of reconciling the service of God with the service of their lusts; when they are resolved to hope and yet resolved to sin, they have no other way, but to perswade themselves that the keeping of *some* Precepts shall atone for the transgression of *others*, and to bear up themselves with the delusive hopes and false confidences of a *partial*, and a *half obedience*.

Now this partiality of obedience, is in so many kinds, as men have sins that are endeared to them, which they will not leave for God's sake, but join with him. For every beloved sin, can make an Interest and Party; and if it reign in us so far, as to make us fulfil it, and to disobey in it, our obedience in other things is all that we have to shew besides, and therefore it must be our excuse for it.

And this being an error of such eternal moment, and a Rock whereupon all the Souls, which miscarry under any appearances of piety, are split; I will be particular in recounting and evacuating those colours and *pretences*, wherewith men usually deceive their own Souls, and think that they justifie and defend it.

Now as for those false grounds and pretentions, whereby men seek to shelter themselves under the practice of such bosom sins, as they overlook, because they have no mind to leave them, hoping to be secured, whilst they continue in them, because of their obedience in other parts of Duty, which is a *partial obedience*: Those pretentions, I say, which are most pleadable in this matter, are these that follow, *viz.* because their indulgence of themselves in those instances wherein they disobey, is either upon *one*, or *more* of these accounts.

1 For

1. For *the preservation of their Religion, and of themselves,* in times *of danger and persecution.*

2. For *the supply of their necessities, by sinful arts, compliances,* and *services,* in times *of want* and *indigence.*

3. For *the satisfaction of their Flesh,* in sins of *temper* and *complexion, age,* or *way of life.*

1. The *first* pretence whereby men justifie to their own thoughts the indulgent transgression of *several* Laws, whilst they obey in *others*; is because *those transgressions,* wherein they allow themselves, are *necessary for the preservation of their Religion,* and *of themselves, in those times of danger and persecution, wherein Gods Providence has placed them.*

Religion is in *danger,* and like to be *undermined* by the *close* and *subtle arts,* or *overborn* by the more *open* and powerful violence of strong and witty Enemies. And this is *God's Cause,* and *Christ* our Lord and Saviour's *interest*; so that whatever is done here, we think is in service of our Maker. If we *fight,* we say it is his *battles*; if we *spitefully persecute* and *devour,* it is *his enemies*; if we *rob and spoil,* it is to weaken *his adversaries*; if we *lye* and *dissemble,* it is to defeat the designs of such as he will call *Rebels*; if we transgress in all the instances, and use all the *lawless liberties* of *war,* it is because we are engaged in his *quarrel.* The Cause which we contend for, and have to manage, is *sacred*; and that we believe will justifie all means, and hallow any services *whatsoever.* So that our *heat* and *fierceness, wrath* and *bitterness, envy* and *malice, revenge* and *cruelty, endless strife* and *ungovernable variance, spoils* and *robberies, seditions* and *murthers, wars* and *tumults*; in a word, all the transports of *passion* and *peevishness, anger* and *ill nature, rigour* and *revenge,* are all *sacred* under this Cover: and pass for *holy zeal,* and *pious vehemence,* and *religious concern* for God; when as in reality, they are a most *impious throwing* off, and *bursting* through all the *Tyes* of *Religion,* and *Bonds* of *Duty towards men.*

All these enormous effects, and horrible instances of an indulged disobedience, are at this Day the consequents of this pretention.

For

For some on one hand, who call us *Hereticks*, and *enemies* to *Christ* and *holy Church*, think no means *sinful*, whereby they can *weaken* and *divide*; *seduce*, *surprize*, or any way *destroy* us. For they esteem it *lawful* to *dissemble* under all shapes, to *gain* a *Proselyte*, or to *disaffect* a *Party* to our *Communion* and *Government*, and *act* a *part* and play the *Hypocrite* in all Disguises, and under cover of all Trades, the better to insinuate themselves among all sorts of men. They will *affirm falshood*, even of their *own* Church, when it serves their turn; and *deny* any *Doctrines*, *Precepts* or *Parts* of it, when they are a *scandal* to the Persons whom they would practise upon, and make against them. They make no conscience of *lyes* and *perjuries* in conversation, when thereby they can promote the Churches interest. For they have found out ways, to *deceive* without *lying*, and to *lye* without *sin*, and to *forswear* without *perjury*, and to *perjure* themselves without *danger*, by their *pious frauds*, and *religious arts* of *equivocations*, *mental reservations*, *dispensations*, *pardons* and *indulgences*. They can be *treacherous* and *faithless* without *breach* of *faith*, if it were made to *Hereticks*; they *assassinate* and *murther Magistrates*, *embitter* and *embroil Subjects* against their *Governours*, and against *one another*; they *conspire* the *death of Kings*, the *confusion* and *fall of Kingdoms*, the *ruine* of all that dare *oppose* them, yea, even of all that *differ* from them. And all this they do for *Christ's* sake, in a *zealous concern for God and Religion*, and for the utter extirpation of all *heresie* and *schism*. For it is this pretence, which bears them out through all, and makes them believe that they are *serving God*, whilst after this extravagant rate they are overturning his whole Gospel.

And *others* again even of our *own selves*, who justly abhor these damnable instances of disobedience, upon the pretence of preserving or propagating Religion, in some *furious* and *fiery spirited* sort of *Papists* (for God forbid that we should think them all to be of this temper) do yet run into the same extravagance, which upon so great reason they condemn in them.

For if we look into our *zeal* for the *common Religion* of *Protestants*; we shall find that we transgress *many*, and those most *material* and *weighty* Laws of it, whilst

whilst we express our *affection* and *concern* to *defend* and *preserve* it.

For doth not this *pretence of preserving our Holy Protestant Religion*, carry us beyond all the bounds of *peaceableness* and *good subjection?* Our great fears about its defence make us daily to *distrust our lawful Governours*; to *think*, and *speak irreverently*, and *reproachfully of their persons*; to *undervalue* all their *counsels*, to *misconstrue* all their *actions* and *proceedings*; and with much *undutiful credulity*, and *unchristian rashness*, to *believe*, *and spread* abroad concerning them most *odious suspicions*, and *invidious reports*: They make us *pragmatical* and *busie-bodies*, to go out of our *own sphere*, and to *usurp* upon the *Magistrates*, in *projecting means* and expediences, *prejudging Criminals*, and *irreverent censuring*, *reproaching*, yea, and oft-times *slandering of our Governours*, if they, either in *Court* or *Council*, at the *Board* or on the *Bench*, determine contrary to our anticipations. They make us to *disturb* the *quiet*, and to *unsettle* the *peace* of our *fellow subjects*, in filling their minds with *endless jealousies* about their *Princes care*, and their *own safety*, and in possessing them with *discontents*, and *undutiful suspicions*, *words* and *actions*, to the great *weakning of Government*, and *disturbance of the publick peace*.

Yea, I add further, these same fears for our endangered Religion, transport us into the transgression of sundry weighty Laws, which oblige us towards our very *enemies*, who have contrived to destroy us. For they have made us most partially *backwards to believe any thing that is good*, and *forward to catch at every thing that is spoken ill against them*. They have made many of us *fierce* and *implacable*, *malicious* and *revengeful*; and have caused us to *thirst* after their *blood*, and to be in *pain* when they *escape*, and to *measure* our *Religion* and the *soundness of our piety*, by a *reproachful*, *spiteful*, and *implacable usage* and *behaviour* towards them. *All* which are *tempers* and *practices*, most contrary to those Laws, of *forgiving injuries*, of *loving enemies*, of *praying for our persecutors*, of *returning good to all that have evilly entreated us*, of *meekness* and *patience*, *mercy* and *placableness* towards the *worst* of *men*, yea, even the *worst* of *enemies*, which are so much the soul and spirit of that Religion, which we pretend to be so zealously concerned for.

And if we look into our *Zeal* for our *several parties*, how many other Laws shall we find to be daily transgressed, I will not say for the preservation, but even, where that is sufficiently secured, for the higher *advancement* and *encrease* of them? For what *rude* and *unmannerly*, *envious* and *ill-natured reflections*, are daily cast upon *those persons*, especially *Ministers*, and men of *Note* and *Eminence*, who differ from us? How forward are many among us, to *undervalue* and *disparage*, to *contemn* and *affront* them; to heap *reproach* and *infamy* upon them, thereby to render their *persons ridiculous*, and their *pains useless*? For are not several of us perpetually *censuring* and *speaking evil* of them, *undervaluing* all their *real vertues*, *putting hard* and *uncandid interpretations* upon all their *actions*, *prying diligently* and *maliciously* into all their *defects*, and *aggravating* all their *faults* or *follies*, *raising* continually, and *spreading* to their disparagement, *uncharitable* and *envious*, yea, oft-times *false* and *slanderous reports*? We *envy* and *hate*, *reproach* and *censure*, *revile* and *slander*, *bite* and *devour* one another: And all this *fierceness* and *uncharitableness* we use, for that *meek*, that *charitable*, *gentle*, *quiet* thing, *Religion*. For in its service we take our selves to be engaged, and so long we fansie that we have a *liberty* of *saying* or *doing* any thing.

Thus full of *Sin* and *Disobedience*, is this *sanctified pretence*. It is the cover for every offence, and the common shelter for all transgressions: for we boggle not at any *Sin*, so long as it tends to *preserve us* in the *prosperous profession*, of our *endangered*, or *oppressed Religion*.

But if men would consider calmly, and have patience to look beyond the surface and bare outsides of things, they would soon discern the vanity of this pretence, and how far it will be from excusing any such sinful and disobedient practices, as they seek to justifie and warrant by it.

For as for *true* and *substantial Religion*, for protection whereof they would be thought to venture upon all these transgressions, it stands in no need of their help to *preserve it in persecuting times*, although they should use *innocent* and *just means*, not such as are *sinful* and *disobedient*. It would live then without their care, and whether they went

went about by any *politick* means to preserve it, or *no*. For *Religion* is not *lost*, when *Religious men* are *persecuted*; it doth not *suffer*, when they do who profess it, seeing it is not one *jot* impaired when men are *buffeted* and *imprison'd*, nay, *bleed* and *die* for it.

Indeed, as for the *freedom* of the *outward means* of Religion, (*viz.*) the *publickness of preaching*, the *community of prayers*, the *unrestrained use of Sacraments*, and the like; they are much *straitned* by *persecutions*, and we must expect to feel, either a *great want*, or at least a *great difficulty* in them, when *Times* are *troublesome*. A persecuting Government can in great measure deprive us of them, when, after our utmost use of all such means as are no ways *undutiful* or against any Law of Christ, we are not able longer to preserve them.

But as for the *substantial part* and *main body* of Religion it self, which consists in *sound faith*, and *upright obedience*, and which those *outward means* are *appointed to beget* in us; no state of Times need make them wanting. For they are within our selves, and depend altogether upon *God's Grace* and our own *Free Wills*; so that all the Powers of *Earth* and *Hell*, are never able to rob us of them. Could the *violence* of *persecution* have *oppressed* our *Religion*, it had been *stifled* in the *birth*. For it entred in a persecuting age, and yet it was not *overborn* by the pressure of its sufferings, but bravely *overcame* them. It *begun*, *grew* up, and *conquer'd* all the World, in the very *heat* of *affliction* and *opposition*. The more it was burdened, the more still it spread; and the more men sought to straiten it, the further was it enlarged; the common observation then being this, that *the* (c) *unparallel'd sufferings of its professors, were the true prolifick cause of the vast increase of the Church.*

(c) *Nec quicquam tamen, proficit exquisitior quæque crudelitas vestra illecebra est magis Sectæ. Plures efficimur quoties metimur à vobis, semen est sanguis Christianorum.* Tertul. Apol. c. 50.

And, indeed, what should hinder Religion from thriving in *evil times*? For the same Religious Duties, which are practised with more *ease* in a prosperous, are exercised also, but with greater *honour*, in an afflicted state of things. To *believe*, and *do well*; to be *pious* and *pure*, *chaste* and *sober*, *just* and *charitable*, *meek* and

gentle, *quiet* and *peaceable*, with all other instances of a substantial and acceptable Religion, are indifferent and undetermined to any turns of Providence. They may be shewn under *fines* and *imprisonments*, *axes* and *halters*; as *well*, and much *more honourably*, than in times of *ease* and *softness*.

Nay, some of its most *eminent parts* and *noble instances*, are not capable of being exercised at other times. For the duties of *patience*, and *taking up the cross*, of *forgiving injuries*, and *doing good to enemies*, of *praying for them that persecute us*, *and despitefully use us*, which are the most *exalted strains*, and glorious heights of our Religion, are such, for which a *peaceable* and *prosperous*, a *favourable* and *flourishing* age affords no famous opportunities. For we must be in a state of *suffering evil*, and labouring under a load of persecution, before we can sufficiently evidence, how *readily*, how *magnanimously*, how *meekly*, how *charitably*, and *Christian*-like we can undergo it.

So that as for *Religion* and *Sufferings*, they are at no such distance, but that they may very easily be made to meet; they bear no such mutual opposition, but that they may very well *consist* together; nay, I add farther, but that they may *honour* and *ennoble*, and in many instances, *enlarge* and *improve* each other. And therefore Religion needs not to be preserved from sufferings, since it cannot only live in them, but is also much extended, heightned, and advanced by them.

But where Religion wants our help, and calls for our assistance, yet is it not possible for us to please *God*, or to secure it, by *sinful* means, but only by such, as are either *vertuous*, or at least *innocent*.

It is not possible for us, I say, to *please God* by *sinful means*, although we intend them for his own service. For what is there in God, that should be served by our sins? Is his *love* for any thing greater, than his *hatred* is for sin, so as the gratefulness of *that*, should make *this*, which is otherwise most *offensive*, to be an *acceptable service*? Is any thing that we can offer to him so pleasing, as our obedience? Is he more delighted, when we follow our *own* counsel, than when we follow *his*; when we do our *own*, than when we do *his* pleasure; For all *those* Laws of the Gospel, and instances of obedience, which

which under this pretention we transgress, are ways of *God's own appointment*; they are a service of his own chusing, and fitted in all things according to his liking; a Rule that he has thought most absolute to direct our actions, and most fit for us to walk by. If then we would express *our concern* for *God*, our *venerable esteem* of his *wisdom*, our *acquiescence* in his *choice*, our *submission* to his *ordering*, our *acknowledgment* of his *Authority*, and our *chearful compliance* with his *pleasure*; let us do it by a religious observance of *these* Rules, which are of his *own* prescribing. Let us honour him in his own way, by *doing our duty*, and practising *such* things as he has made expressions of honour, by making them instances of obedience. For *disobedience* can serve no *interest of God*, nothing that we can do being a more effectual reproach to *all* his *Attributes*, than to *disobey* him.

Nor is the use of evil and *unlawful means*, in any wise a fitter expression of our *care for Religion*. For what is there in Religion, that can be honoured and advanced by disobedience? Is there any thing in *it* so *sacred*, as the *Divine Law*; and dare any man call that his *care* of them, when he *lays waste*, and plainly *rejects* them? It is gross impudence, for any man to pretend *Piety*, in the *breach of Duty*; and to cry up *Religion*, whilst he is acting *irreligiously*; he prides himself in the *empty name*, when it is clear to all that he has lost the *thing*; for as for *Piety* it self, and *true Religion*, by transgressing and trampling upon the Divine Laws, he doth not *further* and *defend*, but *impiously* and *irreligiously destroy* it.

It is not *Religion* then, whatever men may vainly pretend, which makes them run into the *breach of Laws*, and contempt of Duty, least they should *suffer* in the *profession* of it. For God and Religion owe them no thanks for such a course, because *he* is not *honoured*, nor *it strengthned* and *preserved*, but *ruined* and *destroyed* by it.

But the *true* and *real cause* of *such disobedience*, whereof *God* and *Religion* are only the *colour* and *false pretence*, is plainly a *great want* of *Religion*, and of the *love of God*, and too *great* a *love of the world*, and of *their own selves*. Men are hurried away, by an *unmortified* love

of *pleasures*, *honours*, and *temporal interests*; and they have not *Religion* enough, to *restrain* and *over-rule* them. For *these* it is, and not *Religion*, which *sufferings* and *persecuting times* take from them: And an *ungovernable desire* to preserve *these*, which makes them so *violent*, as that, at *such* times, no *Laws of Religion* can *hold* them. When men *set at nought* and *disparage Governours*, *disobey Laws*, *disturb* the *Publick Peace*, *injure their fellow-subjects*, and commit several other *sinful* acts and *irreligious* violations of the *Laws of Christ*, that they may *keep off Persecution* for the *profession* of the *Christian Faith*: They shew plainly, that they will follow *Christ* only in a *thriving*, but not in a *suffering Religion*. They will serve him no longer, than he sets them *uppermost*, and above their Brethren. For rather than *suffer* any *loss*, and fall into any *dangers* for their *adherence* to him, they will *leave* him and his Laws to look to themselves, and flatly disobey him. But when they do so, it is *shameless hypocrisie* to pretend, that all their *transgressions* and *disobedience* are still upon the *Principle*, and from the *Power* of *Religion*; since it is not *Religion*, but a *resolution* to be *uppermost*; not *duty*, but *ambition*, *covetousness*, *sensuality*, *revenge* or a *nest* of some *other unmortified* and *reigning vices* of *like* nature, which make them under *pretence* of a *conscientious care* for *religious profession*, to *destroy all religious practice*.

This one would think, is *plain* and *evident* to any man, who can have the patience to consider it; that *True Religion can never be the cause of sin*, or *make men irreligious and disobedient*. *That* must not for *shame* be called men's *Religion*, but their *Lust*, which makes them *wicked*, and carries them on to *transgress* God's *Laws*, that are the *chief* and *Sovereign* part of his Religion, which, who so *keeps*, is a *religious*, as whosoever *breaks* them, is an *ungodly* and *irreligious* Man.

This, indeed, is clear Doctrine, and obvious to any *common*, if it be withal a *free* and *considerate* understanding. And it were scarce possible that any Men should think otherwise, had they not, either by *accident*, *haste*, or *ill design*, taken up an odd *notion* of Religion, altogether *different* from that which the *Scriptures* give, and which all *considerately* religious Men have of it.

For

For by *Religion* they mean only their *adherence* to the *Doctrines* and *Opinions*, but not to the *Laws* and *Precepts* of the *Gospel*. And when they talk of *defending* and *maintaining* of *Religion*, they intend not a defence of *Laws*, but of *Notions*; not a maintainance of the *practice* of *Christian Precepts*, but only of the *profession* of *Christian Doctrines*. They are of the Religion which *Christ* Doctrinally *reveals*, but not of that which he Authoritatively *commands*; and will *know* and *believe* what he pleases, but do what they please themselves. They are only for a Religion of *Orthodox Tenets*, but not of *Upright Practice*; and if *thereby* they can preserve Men *safe* in *thinking*, and *professing well*; they fansie that God will not be offended with their use of any *means*, though never so *wicked* and *disobedient*.

But this is a most *gross mistake*, and a most *dangerous Notion* of *Religion*, which is quite another thing than what this conceit doth represent it to be. For,

First, The *prime part* and matter of *Religion*, is the *practick part*, (viz.) the *Laws* and *Precepts*, the *Promises* and *Threatnings* of the *Gospel*. And agreeably thereto, the * *prime business* of all *Religious* Men, is an *obedient practice* and *performance* of them, or a *vertuous discharge of Duty* and a *Holy Life*. This is that Religion whereby all of us must stand or fall, and that great *condition*, which as I have shewn, we must for ever *live* or *die* by. *When Christ comes to Judgment*, says S. *Paul*, *he will render to every Man according to his deeds*, Rom. 2. 6. And in that prospect of the last Judgment, which S. *John* tells us God vouchsafed him, *Men were judged every one according to their works*, Rev. 20. 13. This Religion of *Obedience* and a *good Life*, is that which the *Gospel* is full of, wherein every *Chapter*, nay, almost every *verse* of it *instructs* us, and some way or other *directs*, *exhorts*, *encourages* and *excites* to. And therefore, as ever we would pass for Religious Men in the *Scripture Notion*, we must be careful to live in all *Piety towards God*, by complying readily with all *his Laws*, *depending* upon his *Providence*, and *resigning* our selves up to his *pleasure*, in all *purity* and *soberness*, being free from all *lust* and *intemperance*, all *sinful pleasures*, and *covetous practices*; in all *justice* and *charitableness*, *doing right*, and *keeping peace*, and *shewing mercy* and *kindness* towards all Men. This, says S. *James*,

* *Nostro autem populo quid horum potest objici, cujus omnis Religio est sine scelere, & sine macula vivere?* Lact. de just. l. 5. c. 9.

will pass for *pure and undefiled Religion before God and the Father* at the last day, if in such instances as these, we have expressed, not our Opinions, but our Obedience, by *visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and by keeping our selves unspotted from* all filthiness and Disobedience of the *world*. But *if any man* pretends to be religious, who is destitute of this Obedience, *that Man's Religion is vain*, Jam. 1. 26, 27.

Secondly, Another great *part* and *object* of Religion, is the *Doctrines* of the *Gospel*. And agreeably, another act or instance of *Religious Service*, is *Faith*, or *Orthodox Belief*. And this is intended by God himself, as a *means* to produce the former; Faith being the great *instrument* in working out our Obedience. *For this is that Victory*, says St. *John*, which makes us conquerers, and *overcometh the World, even our Faith*, 1 John 5. 4. An *obedient practice*, is the Great thing that a *righteous faith* aims at; it is its *end* and *perfection*, that which consummates and compleats it In being, as St. *James* assures us, *by works* which *faith* (d) *co-operates* and concurs to, that *faith is made perfect*, Jam. 2. 22. And this all the points of our *Christian Faith* are most admirably fitted to effect in us. For in that *epitome* and compendious account of them, where-into 'tis like they were contracted by the *Apostles*, however by *Apostolical Men*, and which is usually called the *Apostles Creed*, there is not any *one* purely *speculative* Article, or point of *idle* notion, and *meer belief*: But every one is influential upon our *practice*, and helps on our obedience; as any man, of competent skill and abilities, may discern by running over the particulars.

(d) Πίστις συνήργει τοῖς ἔργοις.

These *two* then, (*viz.*) *Knowledge* and *Practice*, or *Faith* and *Obedience*, take in the Compass, and integrate the nature of our *Religion*. Obedience is the *chief* thing, and *first* in God's design; and Faith or Knowledge is the great *means* which God has prescribed us whereby to compass and effect it. So that *Religion* in that sense, wherein the *Scriptures* use, and God at the last day, will *reward* it, is the same as *obedience to the Gospel proceeding from a belief of it*, or in St. *Paul*'s phrase, an *Obedient Faith*, or a *Faith which worketh by Love*, Gal. 5. 6.

And

And now let any man, who considers this, bethink himself, and tell me, whether the *transgression of God's Laws* can ever be called *Religion* in the *Scripture-sense*; or whether it be possible for men to evidence themselves to be *Religious*, by their *disobedience*. For the making us obedient to God's *Laws*, is the great design, and *ruling* part of all true and acceptable Religion; and the belief and profession of God's *Truth*, is an exercise and instance of it, that avails us only so far, as it concurrs to, and effects this Religion of Obedience. So that Religion is not *preserved*, but *lost* by breach of Duty; it is never *strengthned*, by *disobedient* and *sinful* means, but is always wasted and destroyed by them.

Let no man therefore ever dare to make Religion a cover for unlawful Lusts; or dream of protecting it from sufferings and persecutions this way. For if they are *scandalized* at the *Cross*, that is, if they fall off from *religious* and *obedient walking* into *irreligious transgressions*, to prevent those *crosses* which in persecuting times are annexed to a *religious practice* and *profession*; they are *scandalized*, or (e) *offended* in him. The Cross is to them a (f) *stumbling-block*, and a *rock of offence*, it makes them trip, and turn out of their duty; because they will disown their Lord, and break all his Laws, rather than undergo it. And this is a most provoking sin, and subjects men to a most dreadful punishment. For as God will abundantly recompence any losses, which befall us through the exercise of an *obedient* Religion, and a pious conscience; so will he also inflict such torments, as infinitely surpass all those light and present advantages, which we may at any time promise our selves from our *politick disobedience*. *For whosoever*, by sinful means, *will seek*, *in perilous* and *persecuting* times, (such as those were) *to save his life* in this world, *he shall* certainly *lose it* for ever in the next world: *But whosoever shall lay down his life* for Christ's *sake* (in taking up that cross which is laid upon a Christian profession, and a Christian practice) *that same* man *shall* save and encrease it eternally, *Luke* 9. 23, 24. So that no dangers in obedience, can ever render it secure for any man to disobey. But that which God indispensibly exacts of us in perilous cases is this. *Fear not them which kill the body*, but, after that is done, have nothing more

(e) Matt. 11. 6.
(f) 1 Pet. 2. 8. Gal. 5. 11.

more to fright you with, being utterly *unable to kill*, or so much as touch *the Soul*; *but fear him*, who exacts Obedience of you even at such times, as your bodies are like to perish for it; for he, after he hath killed the body, which is all that they can do, *is able* eternally *to destroy both Body and Soul in Hell*, Matt. 10. 28.

No dangers then can make Obedience cease to be our *Duty*; nor any sufferings make it cease to be our *Interest*: So that neither *Religion*, nor *Prudence*, will ever allow of sinful means; but every *Religious*, yea, every *Wise* Man, must take up the Cross, and patiently bear any sufferings that come upon him for Religion, rather than use any breach of Duty, or unlawful ways, either to prevent, or remove it.

And this the *Saints* of God and *Religious* Men always did. For no dangers or hazards, no pains or sufferings in Obedience, could never draw them to seek for shelter by disobeying. *David* was tryed with hazards and persecutions of all sorts, but neither *sense* of *present*, nor fears of *future* evils, could ever chase him from his Duty, or make him seek relief from iniquity and sin. He could not be forced upon it by the most apparent dangers, even of the most affecting loss, the loss of *life* it self. *The wicked*, saith he, *have laid a Snare for me, yet I erred not from thy Precepts. My Soul is continually in my hand*, ready to be snatched out of it, *yet do I not forget thy Law*, Psal. 119. 109, 110. *They had almost consumed me upon Earth, but I forsook not thy Commandments*, ver. 87. *and many* now still *are my persecutors* and *enemies, yet do I not decline from thy Testimonies*, ver. 157.

The *Holy Apostles* of our Saviour conflicted with more difficulties and distress, persecutions, and sufferings for the Religion and Obedience of their Lord, than any Men, I think, ever did, or it may be ever will do. *I think*, says S. *Paul*, *that God hath set forth us Apostles last, as it were Men appointed to* the bloodiest, which is usually the last scene of all, even to *death* it self. *For we are* exposed to slaughter, as Men were in the tragical sports of that time, upon a publick Theatre, being *made a spectacle unto the World, and to Angels, and to Men.* From the first entrance in our Office *even to this present hour, we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffetted, and have no certain dwelling place*, being *made*

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as the very *filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things*, from the first, *to this day*, 1 Cor. 4. 9, 11, 13.

If any straits could authorize an evil action, or if any pressures could justifie a disobedient escape, sure these would. But they knew too well the nature of their Religion, ever to dream of a liberty to sin that they might avoid persecution, and they were too resolutely addicted to it, ever to attempt it. For neither the *extremity* of their *sufferings*, nor the *desperateness* of their *danger*, could ever make them transgress their Duty, or go beyond the Laws of their Religion, to lessen or prevent them. But they obeyed *bravely* and *entirely*, even in the *highest strains*, even in the most *ungrateful instances*, even in *those* matters wherein, if any where, the *malice* and *violence* of the enemies, would *provoke*, or rather *force* them to disobey. For in the midst of all their pressures, says St. *Paul*, *being reviled, we bless*; *being persecuted, we suffer it*; *being defamed, we do* nothing worse than *entreat* and pray for our defamers, 1 Cor. 4. 12, 13. *In patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in* popular *tumults, in* manual *labours, in all* these *things*, and in the throng and distraction of all our sorrows, *we approve our selves as the* true, obedient Servants, and faithful *Ministers of God*; shewing that, not by any selfish, disobedient, politick shifts, but by *pureness* of conversation, *by long-suffering*, *by kindness*, even to our very enemies; in a word, *by* the most excellent of all gifts, and the epitome of all Duty, Charity or *love unfeigned*, 2 *Cor.* 6. 3, 4, 5.

Religion then can never give *protection* to any *Disobedience*, nor our *concern* and *zeal* for God, be pleaded with any shew of *modesty* or *reason*, in vindication of our *Transgressions* of any of his *Laws* or *Precepts*. For *Religion needs no defence* from *times of suffering*; it can *live* in them, it is *improved* by them, nay, some of its most *glorious* parts and *eminent* instances are *never* shewn in any *lustre*, but when we fall *under* them. And where it *ought* to be defended, the *breach of Laws* is in no wise a *fit instrument* for its *advancement* and *protection*. For *God* cannot be *honoured*, nor *Religion advanced* by Disobedience. *Obedience* is so *essential* and *super-eminent* a part of its Nature, and so preferable to any *idle profession* or *ineffective belief*; that to transgress *Christian Laws*, for

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the maintenance of an *undisturbed liberty* in *professing Christian opinions*, were not to *strengthen* and *preserve Religion*, but *dangerously to wound*, if not *wholly* to *destroy* it. This disobedience to *Christian Laws*, that we may avoid suffering for the *profession of Christian Doctrines*, is such, as the very *temper* of the *Gospel*, which is made up in great part of *passive Precepts* and a *suffering Religion*, plainly *contradicts*; such as its *Laws* and *Precepts* strictly *forbid*; such as *Christ* our Lord and Judge will *certainly* and most *severely punish*, and such as the most *persecuted religious men*, could never be *provoked* or *forced* into, either by the *greatness of their fears*, or by the *violence* of their *pains*, although the most exquisite that could be invented, by the most *searching wits*, and *keenest malice* in the world.

So that whensoever men *sin* to avoid *suffering*, and disobey the *Laws* of Religion to preserve the *profession* of it from *persecution*; it is not *Religion*, but their *Lusts*; not their *love of God*, but their *love of their own selves* which makes them *disobedient*. *Religion* will upon no accounts justifie their transgressions, but utterly condemn them: And unless their repentance prevents it, God at the last Day will *endlesly punish*, and avenge for them.

But as for *Religion*, in that *narrow sense* wherein some understand it, *i. e. the use of religious Ordinances, and the profession and belief of religious Opinions*; if Men would shew their *care* and *concern* to preserve the free liberty and unpersecuted use of that, so as both *God* and all *good Men* should honour and *commend* them; let them shew it in a *pious* and *discreet* management. Which they will justly be thought to do, if they *keep within their own sphere*, and *use* even there *no sinful and disobedient means*, and *are zealous in the first place for the practice and preservation of religious Laws, and next to that for religious Ordinances and Opinions*.

1. In shewing their care to preserve the *free liberty* and *unpersecuted use* of *religious Ordinances* and *Professions*, they must *act within their own sphere*. We private Christians must not prescribe methods of preserving it to *publick* Magistrates, or *censure* their *proceedings*, and *speak irreverently* of their *persons* and *administrations*, when they determine otherwise than we had thought

fitting.

fitting. We must not, without *consent* and *approbation* of *Authority*, *combine* in Bodies, and *associate* in *solemn Leagues*, *Bonds*, and *Covenants*, to be aiding and assisting to each other, with our *Persons*, *Arms*, and *Purses*, to *protect* it against all Opposers. For these are such things, as are no part of *our* business; but God has hedged them in, and entrusted them in *other hands*. He has delegated that power to *Kings* and *Governours*, to take care of the *common good*, and to judge of *publick expedients*. He has put the *sword* into the *Magistrate*'s hands, and has authorized him, and him *only*, to have power of life and death, and to decree and establish *peace* and *war*. And if any Man, without his order, shall take the Sword, and use it against his Brother; he may read his Sentence, which is writ in plain words already, *They that take the sword*, as every Man doth when Authority doth not allow, or reach it out to him, *shall perish by the sword*, Matt. 26. 51.

These means then, and any other which God has appropriated to the care, and entrusted in the hands of other Men, can be no *lawful* expressions of our care, but an *unlawful* intruding into another's office; a *sinful* use of what is put out of *ours*, and committed to *another's* management. Our exercise and use of them, is a *proud usurpation*, an *unpeaceable encroachment*, a *busie meddling* in other Men's *Offices* and *Affairs*, against the plain Precept, or *studying to be quiet*, and to *do our own business*, 1 Thess. 4. 11.

But the endeavours which we are to use, and the means whereby we must try to secure to our selves, an unpersecuted freedom in religious Ordinances and Professions, must be such, as are within the sphere of *private* Men. We must be *upright* and *exemplary* in the practice of it *our selves*, and press a like exemplariness in the practice of it upon *others*. By our *humble*, *modest*, *peaceable* and *submissive* carriage, we must convince such as are in power, that it *deserves* protection; and by our *affectionate*, *fervent*, and *importunate* (g) *prayers* to God, we must endeavour to have it put into *their hearts* to protect and preserve it. We must *plead* its Cause, and represent that *truth* and *goodness* which may recommend it; and try to *wipe* off the *aspersions*, and *rectifie* the *mistakes* of such, as plead *against* it, or think

(g) Ἐμοὶ δὲ ἔδοξεν ἐν τῷ τοῦ θεοῦ φιλανθρωπίᾳ, καὶ τοῖς χρίσμασιν αὐτῶν δίκαιον, τοῦτο μόνον ἐγκλῆσαι καὶ τὸ διώκτης φάρμακον, says *Nazianzen* of the putting by *Julian*'s designs against the Christians. *Orat.* 3. *adv. Julian.*

think *hardly* of it. These, and such like means, are the laudable service in this Case, and the proper business of *private* Christians. And whilst their care is contained within this compass, and they act thus within their own *sphere*, it is *excellent* and *praise-worthy*; they seek to preserve *Religion*, and their seeking to do it in this way, is it self very *pious* and *religious*.

2. In shewing their care to preserve the *free* and *unpersecuted profession* of Religion, they must exercise such only of those actions within their own sphere, as are *lawful* and *innocent*, but by no means endeavour to maintain it by such, as are *sinful* and *disobedient*. They must not defend it by *lyes* and *forgeries*, by *wrath* and *bitterness*, by *fierceness* and *revenge*, by *slandering* and *reviling* of their *Oppossers*. They must *so* defend Religion, as not to *disobey* it; because that is not *defending*, but *betraying* it. A *free profession* is no further desirable, than it tends to an *upright practice*. So that to disobey for it, is to lose all that wherefore we endeavour for it. *Truth* must never be bought with the loss of *innocence*; nor must we ever commit any one *sinful action*, to promote a freedom of *orthodox* and *true profession*.

3. In evidencing their care in preserving the free and unpersecuted profession of Religion, after having taken care of such points of Faith, as are supposed in all Worship of God by Jesus Christ, and Christian Practice, they must be *zealous* in the *first* place for the *practice* and *preservation* of *religious Laws*, and next to that for *religious Ordinances*, and *Opinions*. S. *Paul* directs us to the *great* Object and end of all *religious zeal*, when he tells us, that *Christ came into the world to purchase to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good* WORKS, Tit. 2. 14. Nothing in the World is a more *warrantable* matter of a Man's *zeal*, than *God's Laws*, and *Men's Obedience*. For the *Laws* of Christ's Gospel, are that part which he looks mainly at, and which he has made the measure of *life* or *death*, the Rule of our eternal *absolution* or *condemnation*. And as he accounts of them, so should we too. And having first secured that Belief in God and Jesus Christ; without which we should neither worship nor serve them; our zeal for these Gospel Laws must be *more warm*, and our *care* more *watchful*, than for any other thing. *This I will*, says St. *Paul* to *Titus*, *that thou affirm constantly*,

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That they which have believed in God may be CAREFUL to maintain GOOD WORKS; these things are good, and profitable unto Men. Tit. 3. 8. So that the *practice* of *religious Laws* must be the great point, wherein we are to be *zealous* and *careful* in the *first* place.

Next to which, we must take care of those *opinions*, which have a great *influence* upon, and are the great *productive instruments* of all *obedient practice*; such as are all opinions, which are either *motives* or *inducements*, *helps* or *encouragements* to *Obedience*. In which sort of opinions, our Religion abounds, there being, as I said, no *idle Article* in the Christian Creed, but such *Doctrines* and *Declarations*, concerning *God*, and *Christ*, and our *selves*, and the *other world*, as are either *absolutely necessary*, or *very helpful* to a *holy life*. All which, according to their several proportions in promoting Piety and Obedience to God's Laws, we are to be *zealously* concerned for in the *next* place, as we are for that pious Obedience, which is wrought by them, in the *first*.

But when we have shewn our *good affection* to *substantial Piety* and *Religion*, by a *just zeal* for *Obedience*, and plainly *practical Opinions*, then may it be very fit for us to shew our *zeal*, for *other true Doctrines* and *Professions* likewise. For it is a great honour to *God*, and an ornament to *Religion*, that we have it *pure* and *sincere*, free from all things that are liable to just exception, and from all mixture of *error* and *falshood*. And it is also a great happiness to *Men*, to have *orthodox apprehensions* in Religion, and to embrace nothing for Gospel truths, but what God has thereby declared to them. But it is a further happiness still, and such whereof Men are the most sensible, to be free from the *imperious imposition* and *tyranny* of *errour*; so as neither to be forced upon the *impossible belief* of that, which in our own Minds we clearly see is *false*, and therefore cannot believe; nor upon the *feigned* and *hypocritical profession* of believing a thing, when *really* we do not believe it; *one* of which *two* is Men's unhappiness, when their *professed Religion* falls under *persecution*. Now both these, are *severe* and *rigorous impositions*. For the *first* is utterly *impossible* to any, so long as it continues a *free* and *impartial head*; as the *latter* is to any, whilst it remains an *honest* and *obedient heart*. So that all Men have very great reason, so far as they

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can by all *innocent* and *honeſt* ways, to be *zealous* againſt them, and to uſe all the *lawful* care and caution that poſſibly they can, to avoid ſo powerful a *motive*, as a ſharp *perſecution* is, to tempt them to a thing ſo *unreaſonable*, as is the *firſt*, and ſo *wicked* and *ſinful*, as is the *latter*.

So long then, as Men will moderate their *zeal* for the *unperſecuted* uſe of religious Ordinances, and profeſſion of religious Opinions with this diſcretion, let them be *zealous* and *concerned* for it in God's Name. For it is their Duty ſo to be; and *God* will *reward*, and all *good* Men will *commend* them for it. If they take care, that their *zeal tranſport* them not beyond their own *ſphere*, that it carry them not againſt their *Duty*, and that (ſeeing the neceſſary points of Faith already fixed) it be concerned in the *firſt* place for *Laws* and *practical Opinions*; they may allow it after that, to ſpend it ſelf upon other Points, which have more of *ſpeculative truth*, but leſs of *practice*. This zeal now is *excellent*, 'tis truly *pious*, 'tis *religious*.

But if they have a *zeal* without *Obedience*; if for preventing of perſecution in the profeſſing of true opinions, they run upon ſinful means and undutiful Tranſgreſſions; their *zeal* is *ungodly*, and all their pretended care of *Religion* is plainly *irreligious*. For *Religion* is not beholding to them, but their own *luſts*; it condemns their diſobedient actions, and unleſs their timely *Repentance* prevent it, God will moſt ſeverely puniſh them. So that as for this *firſt* pretence for a *partial* Obedience, *viz. our allowing our ſelves in the Tranſgreſſion of ſome Laws, whilſt we obey in others*, becauſe *thoſe Tranſgreſſions wherein we indulge our ſelves are neceſſary to keep off perſecution for the ſake of Religion*; it is a *vain*, *deceitful* ground, and will certainly fail any Man, who relies upon it.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of the two remaining pretences for a partial Obedience.

ANother pretence, whereby men justifie to their own thoughts the *allowed transgressions* of *several* Laws whilst they *obey* in *others*, is the *serving of their necessities*; because those instances of disobedience, wherein they indulge themselves, are only such *sinful arts, compliances* and *services*, as are *necessary* to *relieve their want and indigence.*

They are in great straits, and deep poverty; and since God has not provided *conveniencies*, nor it may be *necessaries* for them; they think that they may be allowed to be their own Guardians, and to use any means within their own compass, whereby they can make provision for their own selves. For they are born with the same *appetites* and *indigences* as other men, and some way or other they must *satisfie* and *supply* them. And this they cannot do, at least in any comfortable degree, if in *all* things they must religiously obey, and keep themselves *intirely innocent.* They must *lye* and *overreach, cheat* and *cozen*, if not *pilfer* and *steal* to get *maintenance.* And they must also use *wicked arts*, and *sinful compliances*, to get *favour.* For not having of their *own*, wherewith to *relieve the wants*, to *comfort* the *weaknesses* and to *appease* the *Cravings* of their *natures*, they must be beholden and cannot help it, to the *good will* and *kind charity* of *others.* And other men are *proud* and *humorous*, acted by *self-will* and *vicious interests*; and will therefore reach out no help to them, unless they please them, and do *any* or *all* such things, as they would have them do. They must *lye* and *dissemble, fawn* and *flatter, drink* and *swear*, bear them *company* in their *sins*, and *serve* their *vicious interests*, and *boggle* at no *sort* of *sinful arts*, and *disobedient compliances*; or else they are not for their turn, nor must expect to feel any effects of their kindness.

This is the *hard fate*, and the *great temptation*, of a *poor* and *indigent* condition. And if in this hard case, they have recourse to the *fraud* and *over-reaching cunning* of their *own wits*, or purchase kindness and relief at the *cost* of their *Vertue* and *Obedience*; they hope that God will excuse it. Their necessity they think will bear them out, so long as all their transgressions are only to provide for themselves, and for the competent satisfaction of their own appetites, where his Providence has left them unprovided.

This is the *wicked arguing*, and *disobedient practice* of men of a *soft* and *delicate Religion*. They will obey God in any thing, where they must not disoblige their Appetites; but no further than they will suffer them. They are Servants of their own *Bellies* in the first place, and God shall have just so much, but no more, than they can spare. For they will live easily, and want for nothing in *this* World, as well as be for ever happy in the *next*: And if God will allow them both these, then they are for him; but not otherwise. For they will not endure to *serve a man of sorrows*, to *follow Christ in wants*, to *be subjects* to that *Sovereign* who has no *temporal* rewards, wherewith even in *this* life to *recompence* their *service*. They will serve God just so long, as he will suffer them to serve themselves and their own Appetites; but if his service doth not provide them all convenient supplies, or crosses the satisfaction of these, they beg of him that he would excuse them. In other things they will serve him, if that will content him; but here charity must begin at home, and if they disobey, he must give them a dispensation.

But God will not endure to be thus undervalued, and served in the *second* place. He can in no wise bear, to have the world, and our fleshly appetites set above him; to see them served, and himself slighted; because by this means we do not honour, but debase; not serve, but renounce him. For he can be no faithful servant of God who loves any thing better than his Master; nor is he truly united unto Christ, who can be drawn to disobey him by any temptation. If we love any thing in the World then, though never so dear to us, better than him, we are utterly unworthy of him, and must never hope to be the better by him. For *he that loveth father*

or

or mother, son, or daughter, more than me, saith he, *is not worthy of me,* Matt. 10. 37. Nay, he that hateth not these, and all things else, when they stand in competition with my service; *that hateth not,* I say, not barely his worldly goods, and rich neighbours, but even his *father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple,* Luke 14. 26.

If any cravings of our own flesh then cannot be satisfied without obedience, we must not seek to *pleasure,* but *subdue*; nor endeavour to *fulfil,* but to *deny* them. And if any wants or losses are brought so close to us, that we cannot avoid them without *breach of duty*; they are the burden of the *Cross* imposed upon us, and, unless we would cast off all relation to Christ, we must not shun them. For *whosoever doth not bear his Cross,* says our Saviour, when God's Providence lays it upon his shoulders, *and come after me,* even then when he must suffer under it; *he cannot be my disciple,* Luke 14. 27.

This God peremptorily and indispensibly exacts of us; and there is all the reason in the World why he should. For he will infinitely recompence in the *next* World, either the *want,* or loss of all those things, which, for his sake, we are content to be without in *this. Heaven and eternal life,* will be an abundant, and incomparably surpassing compensation; all *the* wants and *sufferings of this present time, being,* as S. *Paul* says, utterly *unworthy to be compared with that Glory, which shall* then *be revealed in us,* Rom. 8. 18.

Let no man therefore disobey God's Laws for the love of the World, for the supplying of his wants, and the satisfaction of his appetites; and yet for all that perswade himself, that God will own him, and connive at his disobedience. For in doing so, he plainly *renounces God,* and sets the *World above* him; he makes his *Duty* truckle to his *Interest*; he slights *obedience,* and submits to a *temptation.* He does the *work* of *sin,* for the *interest* which *tempts* to it; and that will certainly bring upon him that *death,* which God has established for the wages of it.

Thirdly, A third pretence, whereby men justifie to their own Souls, the indulged transgression of *several* Laws, whilst they obey in *others*; is, because those trans-

greſſions wherein they allow themſelves are only ſuch, as are ſins of *temper* and *complexion*, *age*, or *way of life*.

Sometimes mens *place* and *way of life*, is a continual *temptation* to ſome *particular* ſin; and if they may but have leave to indulge *that*, they will abandon every *other*. The *Courtier* takes himſelf obliged by the faſhion of his place, to *lyes* and *diſſimulation*, *oſtentation* and *vanity*, to *ſinful compliances*, and *faithleſs engagements*, to *promiſe all*, but to *perform nothing*. The *Merchant* in purſuit of his *gain*, ſerves the end of his *trade*, by *fraud* and *diſhoneſty*: He accounts it a piece of his *Art*, to *over-reach*, to *defraud cuſtoms*, to *vend falſe wares*, and ſet *exacting prices*. The *Lawyer* thinks it a part of his *profeſſion*, to *encourage ſtrife*, and *foment differences*; and the *malice* and *revenge*, the *wrath* and *bitterneſs*, the *ſlanders* and *evil-ſpeakings*, the *ſtrife* and *contentions*, which are *other* mens *ſins*, *are his livelyhood*. Theſe ſins, being ever before them, are always a ſnare to them, for they are continually importuned by them, and it muſt be a toilſome pain, and an uninterrupted watchfulneſs, which can preſerve them, from being either won, or wearied into the commiſſion of them. And ſince obedience in theſe inſtances, is a thing which they can ſo very hardly ſpare, they hope that God in mercy will not exact it; but will graciouſly accept them upon their ſervice in other particulars, although here they continue to diſobey him.

Other ſins men are invited and importunately tempted to, by their *age* and *condition*, their *particular temper*, and *complexion*. *Luſt* and *raſhneſs* are the vices of *Youth*, as *craft* and *covetouſneſs* are of the *gray* Hairs. Some ſins are rooted in mens very *natures*; for ſome are naturally inclined to be *paſſionate* and *haſty*, ſome to be *peeviſh*, and others to be *malicious* and *revengeful*. The *temper* of their *bodies*, hurries on ſome to *luſt* and *intemperance*, ſome to *turbulency* and *fierceneſs*, and others to *ſlaviſh fears* and *ſinful compliances*. Nay, a *ſharp* and *long affliction* will ſometimes *embitter* even a *good nature*, and make it *habitually ſowre* and *fretful*, *peeviſh* and *moroſe*. So that mens very *natural temper*, their *age*, and *condition*, prove many times an uninterrupted ſollicitation to *ſome* ſin or *other*, and they always fall, by being always under the power of their temptation.

Now

Now when Men find that some Sins have got thus near to them, and have taken such deep Root in their *way of Life*, nay, in their *very Nature*, since they will not be at the pains to reform and amend, they expect that God should be so gracious, as to dispense with them. As for all the Instances of this kind, he must abate them, seeing they will not perform them; and his pardoning Goodness must supply all the Defects of their Sloath. For God and they must still be agreed, and therefore because they cannot well abandon some of their Darling Lusts, and Bosom Sins for his sake, the Compliance must fall on his Side, and he must desert and cancel all those severe, and grating Laws to serve and pleasure them. And him they will do any thing else for, which doth not contradict their beloved Sin, and never displease him, but when they cannot otherwise fulfil and pleasure it.

Thus, for instance, the *Covetous* Man will obey in keeping back from *Drunkenness* and *Whoredom*, from *Ambition* and *Profuseness*, and all other Sins which are expensive: But as for those other Duties, of *suffering Loss our selves*, rather than *Defrauding* and *Over-reaching others*, of a *contented Mind*, and *contempt of the World*, of *Alms* and *Beneficence*, and all the *chargeable* Expressions of an *active Love*, and an *operative Charity*: Here he stands upon his Points, and chuses to *dispute* rather than to *perform*; to *article* rather than to *obey*.

The *peevish* and *angry* Man, will readily keep the Commands of *Justice*, especially in all its great Instances, and of *Temperance*; he will neither spoil his Neighbours *Goods*, nor *wrong* his *Bed*, nor *pamper* and *defile* his own Body; and will do any thing, which either *ministers* to his *reigning* Lust, or which doth not *contradict* and make against it. But then as for the Commands of *meekness* and *patience*, of *long-suffering* and *forgiveness*, of *speaking well*, and *doing good to enemies*, of *passing over provocations* and *peaceableness*, and all other Instances of *pardoning* and *forgetting injuries*; in these God must excuse him: for his dear Lust opposes them, and he *can* not, he *will* not serve him in the practice of them.

Some, who are of a *tractable* and *submissive*, of a *soft* and *governable* temper, will observe readily all *those* Duties, which their *constitution* has made easie, and which their natural Genius inclines them to. They will be

constant performers of all the *cheap*, because *agreeable* Duties of *Submission* to *Governours*, and *Obedience* to *publick Constitutions*, of *uniformity* in *Worship*, of *honour* and *observance* of the *Laws* and *Establishments*, and of all things belonging to the *Churches Unity* and *outward Peace*. But as for the *severities* of an *inward* and *hearty* Religion, in *mortification* and *self-denial*, in *paring* off all *sinful Lusts*, and *exorbitant Desires*, in *Patience*, and *taking up the Cross*, and in all other *hard* Instances of *Duty* and a *holy Life*: Here they withdraw their Service, because they must contradict their *Natures*, and go against their *ease*; and set themselves, not to *obey* these Laws, but to *evacuate* or *evade* them.

Whereas *others*, who are of a *Temper* more *severe*, but withal of a *querulous* and *restless*, a *busie*, and *ungovernable Spirit*, will keep off from *Atheism* and *Prophaneness*, from *Idolatry* and *Witchcraft*, and *other heinous Impieties*; from *Drunkenness* and *Revellings*; from *Fornication* and *Adultery*; from *Oppression*, and *Fraud*, and other alike *gross* and *notorious* Instances of *Injustice* and *Immorality*. For all these, their strict Temper can easily avoid; they have no great Temptation to them, and are therefore able without much Pains to abstain from them. But then as for those *other* Sins, which agree with the *bent* and Inclination of their *busie* and *ungovernable* Humour; they will still indulge themselves in the practice of them, for all they are of an *equal Guilt*, although indeed of a more *spiritual* and *refined Nature*. For they will strive to *weary Laws*, to *vilifie* and *contemn*, to *undervalue* and *disparage Governours*; they will permit themselves, to be overswayed, by *Spite* and *Malice*, by *Wrath* and *Bitterness*, by *Envy* and *Emulation*, by *Strife* and *Sidings*; to be drawn aside into *Censoriousness*, and *evil-speakings*, into the *raising* and *spreading* of *uncharitable*, and *envious*, yea, *false*, and *slanderous Reports*; they will be *forward* to *magnifie* themselves, to *publish* their *own Praise*, and to *boast* of their *own Actions* and *Attainments*; but withal to *detract* and *lessen*, to *shame* and *disparage others*.

Thus will even these Men, who make the fairest appearance, of abominating all *impious* and *ungodly*, all *immoral* and *debauched* Actions, halt still in their Obedience, and think to please God, not by a *perfect* and *entire*, but a *partial* and a *maimed Service*. For their *Conversion*

version goes but *half* way; not from *Sin* to *Righteousness*, but from *some sorts* of Sin to *some others*. All the Alteration, that their Religion has wrought in them, is not a *forsaking* of Sin, but an *exchange* of it, a Turn from what is more *easily* left, to a more *liberal* Practice of that which they find it *hard* to part with; a *Remove* from *grosser*, and more *scandalously fleshly* Sins, to other more *spiritual* and *refined*, but still as *deadly* and *damnable Transgressions*.

And thus, by all these Instances it appears, that when Men have got some Sins which are *close* and *pleasing*, such as their *Temper* and *Complexion*, their *Age*, or *Condition*, or *way of Life*, has *endear'd* to them so *far*, as that even for *God's* sake they will not part with them; their Recourse is presently to some more *cheap* and *easie* Instances of *Obedience*, that they may *atone* for them. And the same might be shewn in all other Instances of a *partial*, and a *maimed Service*. In all things, they will obey God no further, than their beloved Sins will suffer them; but as *they* yield to the *Law* in *other* things, so must the *Law* yield to them in these: For neither God nor their *Sin* shall rule alone, but the Service shall be shared between them, and both shall enjoy a divided Empire.

But this is a most *damnably deluſive*, and a *desperately false Pretence*. For whatsoever fond Conceits, Men who *love*, and are resolved not to *let go* their Sins, may please themselves withal; yet God, when he comes to judge us, will accept of nothing less than an *entire* Obedience. All his Laws are established under the Pains of Death, and at that Day he will exact all that he has required, whatever our Concern be in it. For he comes not then, as a *corrupted party*, to judge *for us*, to make his own Laws bend and bow to serve our Interests, and to cancel and disanul all such among them, as make against us. But, he comes, as an *upright* and *even Judge*, to execute all his Laws, but not to destroy any of them: He comes to inflict what his Gospel threatens, and his Sentence will then be what it says, not what we can bear. So that if we have *wilfully disobeyed*, and have not *repented*, whether in *one* Instance or in *many*; we must undergo the *Punishment* of our Disobedience. For God is a *Friend* to no Vice, neither one nor other, but he always *forbids*, and he will most severely *punish every* one.

And as for all these *Pretences*, whether that of our *Age*, or our *way of Life*, or of our very *natural Temper* and *Inclination* it self; there will be no *shelter* or *excuse* in any of them, to bear us out in *any*.

There is no Protection to any Sin, from our *Age*; for no *young* Man may pursue *lusts* because they are *youthful*, but is bound to *fly* and avoid them, as those things *which war against*, and would destroy *his Soul*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 22. God's Laws make no *distinction*, of *young* or *old*, but the *same Duties* are the Rule for *both* their *Practices*; and the *same Rewards* or *Punishments* will be returned indifferently to them *both*, upon their *Obedience* or *Transgressions*.

There is no justifiable Plea for any Sin, from our *way of Life*; for a constant (*a*) *Practice* or Trade of *Sin*, as S. *John* says, can be no Man's Employment, but his who *is born of the Devil*, and must inherit under him, 1 *John* 3. 8. But the *way of Life*, whereunto God calls us, is a way of *Piety* and *Obedience*. He has given us his own Laws, for the *way* which we are to walk in; and in that alone it is that we can escape *Death*, and obtain *Salvation*.

(a) ὁ ποιῶν ἁμαρτίαν.

Nay, so far is any thing in the World from sheltring us under the Service of any *one* Sin, that *even* that, which may have the highest Pretence to it of all things *else* whatsoever, *viz.* our very *natural Temper* and *Inclination*, is no *excuse* to us, if it makes us continue in any Disobedience. If any thing in the World could be a just Defence for the practice of any Sin, surely this must. For our Nature is not of our chusing; and therefore its effects ought least of all to be charged on us seeing they least of all proceed from us, but are in great degrees determined to our Hands, before we have any Power, either to *will*, or to *refuse* them. But such is the *purity* and *strictness* of *Christ's Gospel*, that it indispensibly requires us to conquer Sin, not only where it makes no *opposition*, but even where it has the *greatest Strength*, and the *highest Force* of all. For if our very *Nature* draw us on to *disobey*, it *enjoyns* us under all our *Hopes of Heaven*, not to *submit* to it but to (*b*) *strive* against it so long, till we *vanquish* and *subdue* it. For if we would be judged to be *Christ's Disciples* at the last Day, we must *deny our selves*, Matth. 16, 24. As we hope to *live*, we must not perform and fulfil, but kill

(b) Psal. 18. 22, 23.

and

and *(c) mortifie* those *deeds*, whereto we are hurried on by the temper *of our Bodies*, Rom. 8. 13. *If* a lust so dear to thee, as *thy right eye offend thee*, or *(d)* cause thee to offend, *pluck it out*, says our Saviour, *and cast it from* thee: or *if* one so useful to thee, as *thy right hand, cut it off* likewise, *and cast it from thee*: and that for no less reason than this, *Because it is* more *profitable for thee, that one of thy members should* in this manner *perish*, than *that thy whole body should be cast* for ever *into Hell fire*, Mat 5. 29, 30.

(c) Col. 3. 5.

(d) Γκαν-δαλίζει.

Thus vain and helpless are all *these* excuses and pretentions, under which men endeavour to shelter themselves in the indulged transgression of some Laws, whilst they obey in others. For whether their pretence be, the *saving of their Religion from times of persecution*, or the *serving of their necessities in times of want*, or the *satisfying of their own rational temper and inclination*; we see that none of them can justifie their indulged allowance of any *one* sin, nor serve any other turn, than to delude them to their own destruction.

But whosoever would obey to his own salvation, must obey in *every* instance, and continue wilfully to transgress in *none*. He must never hope to please God, by performing nothing but what he lists himself. No, every *particular* Law of God, as we saw above, is bound upon us by all our *hopes of Heaven*, and under the *pains of Hell*; so that we cannot transgress in any, and yet be safe; but that obedience which can secure us, is nothing less than performing in every instance.

For this *third* sort of *Integrity*, viz. that of the *Object*, or performing *all* and every of those Laws which God has given us, both *is*, and *always was*, indispensibly required to *life* and *pardon* since the world began.

Thee have I seen righteous before me, said God to *Noah*, because *Noah did according to A L L that the Lord commanded him*, Gen. 7. 1, 5. And in the repetition of the *ten commandments*, Deut. 5. *O that they would fear me*, says God to the Jews, *and keep* (e) *all my commandments, always, that it might be well with them for ever*, ver. 29. It is nothing less than our obeying in *all*, which God declares that he will accept; and upon nothing less than their *performing all*, that good men have hoped to be accepted. *Then shall I not be ashamed*, saith

(e) Exod. 23. 21, 22.

the

(f) Pſal. 119. 2, 3. & Pſal. 18. 22, 23, 24.

the Pſalmiſt, *when I have reſpect unto* (f) *all thy Commandments*, Pſal. 119. 6, 7. And thoſe Perſons to whom the *Lord doth good*, and ſhews Kindneſs, are only the *upright in Heart*. But as for them, who, although they are right as to the main, do yet *turn aſide* in ſome things *to their crooked ways, he will lead them forth with the Workers of iniquity*, Pſal. 125. 4, 5.

And as this Integrity in *doing the whole will of God*, was required of *Noah* before the *Law*, and of the *Jews under* it; ſo is it likewiſe exacted every whit as ſtrictly of us *Chriſtians*, under the *Goſpel*. For the Obedience of that *Covenant*, whereunto *Chriſt* Commiſſions his *Apoſtles* to *baptize Converts*, is nothing below an *intire* Obedience. *Go*, ſays he, and *baptize all Nations, teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you*, Matth. 28. 19, 20. And this is no more, than what he himſelf had preached before, in his own Sermon upon the Mount. For of the *Moral Law* and the *Prophets*, (which he came to *confirm* and *eſtabliſh*) and alſo of his *own Law*, (which he came then to publiſh and *proclaim*) he affirms plainly, that the Obſervance of it in every particular, is neceſſary to the Attainment of *God's Favour* and *eternal Life*. *He that breaks the* very *leaſt of theſe Commandments, ſhall be called leaſt* (or ſhall be leaſt, or none at all, which is the Senſe of the *Hebrew* Phraſe) *in the kingdom of Heaven*, Matt. 5. 17, 18, 19.

And agreeably to this *Pattern*, and this *Commiſſion*, the *Apoſtles* themſelves, when they came afterwards to diſcharge their Office, did moſt ſtrictly require it, and moſt ſeverely threaten all thoſe in whom it was wanting. *Let us cleanſe our ſelves*, ſays S. *Paul, from all filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of the Lord*, as we hope to attain thoſe good things which he has *promiſed*, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. There is no Remedy, but we muſt either do this or die. *For the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven, againſt*, not only ſome, but *all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men*, Rom. 1. 18. The Curſe takes place, upon the Tranſgreſſion in any inſtance. For the threatning is not barely to ſome *one* or to ſome *few* Laws; but to the *whole Code* which comprehends them all: So that if we tranſgreſs any *one* the Covenant is broken, and the Penalty takes place. For *whoſoever ſhall keep the whole Law* beſides, ſaith S. *James, and yet offend in one Point*,

that

that subjects him to all the evil, and *he is guilty of*, or obnoxious to that punishment, which is appointed for the wages of one and *all*, Jam 2. 10.

As for this *integrity of the object* therefore, or mens obedience to the *whole will* of God; we see that in all *times* and *ages*, it was *necessary* unto *life*, and indispensibly required to *salvation*. For neither the Sons of the *Patriarchs*, nor the Subjects of *Moses*, nor the Servants of *Christ*; no professors of any *true Religion* in the World, were ever accepted upon any service less than *intire*, or upon any obedience that was *maimed* and *defective*. But so much as he thought fit to enjoin, God always exacted of men that they should perform; so that if they did not obey in *all*, they should certainly be condemned as if they had done *nothing*.

So that as for this *third* sort of *integrity*, *viz.* our obedience to the *whole will* of God, or to all the *particular* Laws fore-mentioned, which is the *integrity of the Object*; *it*, as well as both the *former*, is plainly *necessary* to our acceptance, and to render our *obedience available* to our *salvation*.

And thus at *last* it appears, what that *integrity* is, which will render our obedience to all the *particular* Laws of God above recounted acceptable in God's sight. For it is nothing less, than an obedience of the *whole man*, to the *whole Law*, and that not for some *short* space, but for our *whole* time, and to the *end* of our lives. He who thus *intirely* obeys, cannot, as was before observed, be other than *sincere*; and he who obeys *sincerely* and *uprightly*, has all that God requires of him, enough to support his hopes, and to secure his happiness. *Sincerity* and *Uprightness*, is neither more, nor less than is exacted of us; without them we shall surely die, but through them we cannot miss of being happy eternally.

CHAP

CHAP. VIII.

Of obeying with all the heart, and all the soul, &c.

NOW as for this *intire* obedience of the *whole man,* at all *times,* to the *whole will* of God, whereof I have hitherto discoursed in the foregoing *Chapters*; it is that *very* obedience *with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the mind, and with all the strength,* which is so expressly called for in the words of the Commandment, *Luke* 10. 27. *Deut.* 11. 13.

It is not to be expected, that *all our heart,* and *all our mind,* and *all our soul,* and *all our strength* should be so *wholly* devoted to God, as that we should never either *will,* or *think,* or *desire,* or *do* any *other* thing, than what he has commanded us. No, that is a Dream of utter *absurdities* and *impossibilities.* For God has not only *allowed* us, but he has made it plainly *necessary* for us to employ our *thoughts,* and *desires,* and *endeavours,* upon several other things besides *himself* and his holy *Commandments.* Because we cannot live without *meat* and other *necessaries,* and these we cannot *get* without *seeking,* nor *seek* without *desiring,* nor *desire* without *thinking* on them. All the *innocent enjoyments of nature,* and all the *necessaries of life,* all the *laudable advantages of converse,* and all the *lawful benefits of trade* and *employment,* require our *minds,* and *hearts,* and *souls,* and *strength,* as well as *God* and our *Duty*; all our Powers not only may be exercised about them, but they needs *must.* For God himself has so ordained it, it being a necessity of his own making; so that we must employ our endeavours about them, and we cannot do otherwise. And therefore when the Commandment calls for all *our hearts,* and *all our strength,* &c. it is utterly *absurd* and *unreasonable* to understand it of such an *all,* as excludes the exercise of these faculties upon any thing besides; but it *may,* and *must* be understood so, as to leave room for exercising them upon other things likewise,

But all that is included in the *latitude* of that expression, *with all thy heart,* &c. is set out, agreeably to the

the use of the Phrase at other times, in these three Particulars.

1. It notes the *sincerity* and *undissembledness* of our faculties; so as the Phrase, *with all the heart*, signifies the same as in *simplicity* and *honesty*, without *guile* or a *double heart*. For a dissembling hypocritical man, has *one* heart in *shew*, and *another* in *reality*. His heart is not *one entire* thing, but *double* and *divided*. He appears to *will* what indeed he doth *not will*, and to *desire* what in truth he doth *not desire*; so that his whole heart doth not go together, that which he *outwardly* professes being *one*, but that which he *inwardly* intends *another*. And this *simplicity* and *sincere* honesty of intention, is expressed in the course of our common speech by this Phrase *all the heart*, nothing being more usual in our daily converse, than to give assurances of our sincerity in any thing which we do, by saying, it is with *all our heart*. And as *sincerity* is expressed by *all the heart*, so on the contrary, is *dissimulation* and *hypocrisie* set out by a *double heart*. And thus the *men of War*, who were *faithful to David*, and *undissembled* in their service of him, are said *not to have been of a double heart*, Psal. 12. 2. which sense the word *double* has, not only when it is applyed to this *particular* faculty, *viz.* our *wills* and *hearts*, but also when it is attributed to any *other*. And thus we read of a *double*, that is, of a *dissembling tongue*, 1 Tim. 3. 8.

2. This Phrase, *all the heart*, &c. implies the *fervency* and *concernedness of our faculties*. And thus the Latines use the word *whole*, when they express their being *very busie*, or *industriously intent* upon a thing, by saying they are * *whole upon it*.

* *Totus in hoc sum.*

And as this Phrase, *all the heart*, &c. in respect of our *faculties* themselves, denotes these *two* things, *viz. sincerity*, and *fervency*; so likewise in respect of their *object*, or that *will of God* which they are to be employed about, doth it imply.

3. *Integrity*, so that this *fervency* and *sincerity* be shewn in obeying, not only *some*, but *all* the Commandments; not *part*, but the *whole will of God*. For our *heart*, and *soul*, and *strength*, must be *all* or *whole* for God; that is, they must be for all that God is for, and they must be *constant* and *uniform*, not *various* and *divided* therein, being

ing ſome times and in ſome things *for* him, and at other times and in other things *againſt* him. They muſt be for *all* things which he commands, and for *nothing* that he forbids; for we muſt neither *think*, nor *deſire*, nor *do* any thing againſt him. And in this ſenſe, the word *all* or *whole*, is oppoſed to *divided*; and expreſſes thus much, that our faculties do not ſtand *for* ſome commands, and *againſt* others; that they do not *divide* and *parcel*, *pick* and *chuſe* with *God's Laws*; but that they ſet themſelves at all times to obey *wholly* and *univerſally*, obſerving *all* and every *one*.

Now theſe *three*, (viz.) the *ſincerity* and *fervency* of our *faculties*, and the *integrity* of our *obedience*, which are conveniently expreſſed by the word *all* or *whole*, are all indiſpenſibly required of us; as appears plainly from what has been above diſcourſed upon this ſubject. So that they are *all* implied in the latitude of this Commandment, *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind*, &c.

But beſides them I think nothing elſe is. For if we ſhould extend that precept further, and make it include all that the largeſt compaſs of thoſe words would comprehend; we ſhould give it a ſenſe, which is, as I ſaid, *abſurd*, and utterly *impoſſible*.

And to clear this a little more, wherewith ſo many good ſouls are oft-times perplexed, we may further obſerve, that thoſe very men, who *will'd*, and *thought*, and *deſired*, and *acted other* things, as well as God's *Laws*; are yet in the Scriptures expreſly recorded to have *performed* all that is meant in this Commandment, becauſe they ſerved God in the *particulars* which I have mention'd, (viz.) *ſincerely*, *fervently* and *entirely*. For (*b*) *Caleb* and *Joſhua* are ſaid to have *followed the Lord wholly*, Numb. 32. 12. *David kept my Commandments*, ſaith God, *and follow'd me with all his heart*, 1 Kings 14. 8. *Joſiah did what was right in the ſight of the Lord*, 2 Kings 22. 2. Now theſe perſons were men, not only of as great *neceſſities* as others, but alſo of *far higher place*, and *greater buſineſs* in the world. For their ſtation required them to be much employed about it, and to ſpend *frequent thoughts*, and *many deſires*, and *great pains* upon it. So that their *whole heart*, and *mind*, and *ſoul*, and *ſtrength*, could not be employed in God's ſervice any otherwiſe, than

(*b*) Numb. 14. 24. Deut. 1. 36.

than as they loved and served him *intirely*, and *above* all things; and neither *will'd*, nor *acted* any thing besides, when it stood in competition with him. The *sincerity*, *fervency* and *integrity* of their service, was all which they had to shew in answer to this Commandment; and upon the account thereof God did accept them, and has left it on record to all the world that they have *fulfilled* it.

As for the last of these, (*viz.*) *Integrity*, it indeed includes in it all the *rest*. For it is the greatest warranty and effect of *fervency*, and the best evidence of the *sincerity* of our service. Because this, as I said † before, is the great *measure* of *acceptance* in our *thoughts* and *affections*, (viz.) *that they carry us on to acceptable works and actions*. And this is the great * Rule whereby to judge of a *sincere service*, (viz.) *that men be universal and entire in their obedience*. So that if once we perform all that God requires of us; there is no further question to be made, but that we perform it honestly, and with that *fervency* and *concernedness*, which is *sufficient* to our *acceptance*.

† Book 3. Chap. 2.

* Book 3. Chap. 1.

And this *integrity* of obedience including *both* the other, is that very thing, which is meant by the service with *all the heart*, and with *all the soul*, which is exacted of us in the Commandment. Whereof we have still a further argument, because in almost all the places, where any man is said to fulfil *this*, we find *that* annexed as its explication: Which is a plain interpretation of the Scripture to it self, that *to obey with all our powers* is nothing else in its sense, but to be *uniform*, *undivided*, and *intire* in our obedience.

David, says God, *followed me with all his heart*; which appears in this, because he followed me so as to fulfil all my will, and to act nothing against it, but *to do that only which is right in mine eyes*, 1 Kings 14.8. *Caleb and Joshua followed the Lord wholly*; which was seen, in that their obedience was entire to him, and they did not transgress in those particular Laws of Duty, by the breach whereof others provoked him, *Numb.* 32.10, 11, 12. And of *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth*, S. *Luke* says, that they were *blameless*, because *they walked*, not in some, but in *all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord*, Luke 1. 6. But on the other side, as for all such as were *partial*

partial in their obedience to God, and kept some instances of duty, but transgressed others according as they themselves listed; they are said, *not to be whole* in their *hearts* and *other faculties* towards him. *Jehu*, says the Text, *took no heed to walk in the Law of the God of Israel with all his heart*, for of this there is a clear proof, in that his heart run after some sins as well as some duties, *he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam*, although he did from others, 2 *Kings* 19. 31. *If you return unto the Lord with all your heart*, says *Samuel*, *then put away* that particular sin which you still adhere to, *your strange Gods, and serve him only*, 1 Sam. 7. 3. And that this is true in every man's case, as well as it was in theirs, the Psalmist plainly assures us, when he lays it down for an universal Maxim, that *they seek the Lord with their whole heart, who do no iniquity*, Psal. 119. 2, 3.

And thus upon all these accounts it appears, that *to serve the Lord with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind, and with all our strength*, according to the *tenour of the Commandments*; is neither *more* nor *less*, than to serve him *universally* and *entirely*. For it can bear no other sense, because upon *no greater* or *better service than this, God himself has declared, that men have served him with all their heart*, according to the Commandment; and more cannot be *required*, when this *fulfils* it. It can mean no *more*, because those further Rigours which some would strain it to imply against their own Peace, are *impossible in the present condition of humane nature*, and therefore are no fit matter of a Law, nor subject to a Commandment. And lastly, it doth mean no more, because the *Scriptures themselves, where they set it down, are wont to annex this interpretation*, and to give this explication of it.

And thus at last we have seen, what *degrees* and *manner of obedience* to all the Laws recounted in the former Book, is necessary to our acceptance. For we must obey *sincerely* and *entirely*, if ever we expect to reap the rewards of obedience. We must set our selves seriously, (tho' with the infinite tyes of frail Creatures which God will abate for, as I shall shew hereafter) to keep *every particular Law* of God, and that through our *whole lives*: we must *think* on them in our *minds*, and *pursue* them with our *affections*, and *chuse* them with our *wills* so *far*, till

we

we *perform* them with our *strength*, in *outward* and *bodily operation*. This *uprightness* of obedience, which is a certain evidence of its *sincerity*, is all that God's Law requires of us; and it will infallibly save us at the last day, although less than it nothing will.

As for that condition of life and pardon then, which the Gospel indispensibly exacts of us, we now see plainly what it is. For *it is nothing else but our obedience to all the forementioned laws of God, in sincerity* and *uprightness*. It is by this, that all the world must stand or fall at the last day; according to their performance or neglect whereof, they shall then be judged, either to live, or die eternally.

This indeed, though it be a very *great*, will seem a very *uncouth* and *severe* truth, in that degeneracy of manners, and loose lives of our times. But if it do, that is wholly our own fault, and can be no prejudice at all to the declarations of Christ's Gospel. For our Lord has proclaimed it to us plainly enough, and if our own wicked hearts make us shut our Eyes, and willing to over-look it; for that we must blame our selves, but can never hope thereby to evacuate his sentence. This in very deed is the Gospel that he has published, and these are the terms of mercy which he has procured for us: So that if we live up to them, we shall be saved by him, but if we fail to perform these gracious demands, we can promise our selves no benefit at all at last by his death, nor have any ground of hope from his Gospel. All that can be said is, that he offered us Grace and Pardon upon most fair and easie terms, but that we would not accept them. But we preferred the pleasure of our sins before all the glory of his rewards, and chose to hazard all those evils which he threatned, rather than to be at the pains to perform that condition, which he peremptorily enjoyned.

But although, by our wicked lives, we in these days cast off the *light* Yoke of Christ as *over-burdensome*, and make the Covenant of *Grace* it self to become a *rigorous* condition; yet once the case was otherwise, and the world was more *Christian*. For they who professed Christ's Religion then, performed all that he commanded, and practised all that, which as we have seen, his Gospel doth enjoyn. And to go no further for an evidence of this, we will take those accounts of the obedience of Christians in the first times, which the *Apostles* themselves give us.

You, says the Apostle to the *Colossians*, *that were sometimes*, in your Gentile State, *alienated* from God, *and enemies in your minds, by* means of your *wicked works*; *yet now*, since you became Christians, *hath he reconciled in his death, to present you holy and unblameable, and unreproveable*, according to the terms of the Gospel, *in his sight*, Col. 1. 21, 22.

And to the same purpose he speaks of the *Ephesians* yet more fully. *You*, saith he, *hath God quickned* by the preaching of the Gospel, *who*, before you heard of that, *were dead in trespasses and sins wherein in times past* of Gentilism, *ye walked*, as well as others, *according to the* wicked *course of this world, according to* the instigation of *the Prince of the powers in the air*, who is *the spirit that* both afore time and even *now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all*, as I say, *had our conversation in times past*, living just as they did, *in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling* and performing *the desires of our flesh, and were* thereby *the Children of wrath as well as others. But God, even when we were thus dead in sins, hath*, upon our embracing of Christ's Religion, *quickened us together with Christ*, by that same spirit whereby he raised up him, *Ephes.* 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

But the character which he gives of the *Corinthians*, is more particular and compleat still. *No unrighteous*, saith he, of one sort or other, *shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven.* For *neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor revilers, nor drunkards, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such*, indeed, as these *were some of you* once, *(viz.* in your Gentilism) *but* since you were Christned I bear you record, that *you are washed from* those impurities, that *you are sanctified* from those wickednesses, and that *you are justified* from the condemning force of all these Commandments *in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by* the help of *the* enlivening and converting *spirit of our God*, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11.

These places are very full and particular for the *power of Christianity*, and the *perfect and entire obedience* of *Christians*, in *those days*. And yet there is one testimony more of this Apostle, which I must not omit, because it is so very comprehensive; and that is the account which he gives

gives us of the Reformation, which the Gospel wrought among the *Romans*. For before it was preached among them, they were *strangely debauched*, and *unaccountably wicked*; as we may be fully informed, were there no other register of their vices, from the prodigious Catalogue of their sins, which S. *Paul* himself has given us, *Rom.* 1. For *they worshipped and served the Creature more than the Creator*. Their very *women* were so unnatural in their lusts, as to *change their natural use, into that which is against nature*. And *the men, leaving the natural use of the women, burned in their lusts towards one another, men with men working that which is unseemly. They were filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; being full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, back-biters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful.* Thus had they degenerated from all sense of *common honesty* and *honour*, and fallen into the *vilest sink* of *vices*. But when once Christianity took place among them, it quickly turned them from a most *impious* and *monstrously unclean*, into a most *religious* and *holy* People. For so S. *Paul* himself bears witness to them. *You were*, says he, in your time of Heathenism, *the servants*, nay, the rankest slaves *of sin, but God be thanked that ye have* now, since you became Christians, *obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was* by us Apostles *delivered to you.* For *being made free from* that strange inventory of *sins, ye became the servants of righteousness*, Rom. 6. 17, 18. Verse 25. 26. 27. 29. 30. 31.

And what S. *Paul* tells us of *these particular* Churches under his care S. *Peter* will also inform us, was true of *all* the Churches in *Pontus* and *Asia*, with whom he was concerned, and to whom he directed his first *Epistle*, *The time past of our life may suffice us*, saith he, *to have wrought the will of the Gentiles; when we walked* with them *in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries.* Yea, indeed, this doth suffice us. For since we became Christians, we have left off to accompany them in these vices, for which they are estranged to us, and revile us. For *they think it strange, that we run not with them to the same excess of riot as we* used

formerly, *speaking evil of us* for abstaining from them, 1 *Pet.* 4. 3. 4

Thus honest was the service, and thus entire was the obedience of Christians, in the Apostles days. And when they had finished their course, and were called out of this world, Christ's Gospel had still the same effects, and his subjects continued to pay him the same service.

(b) *As for the Religion and Laws of Christ*, says *Lactantius*, *what excellent effects they have upon the minds and lives of men, is plain from every days experience. For, give me a man that is fierce, hasty, and ungovernable; and with this Law I will make him as tractable and gentle as a Lamb. Give me one who is covetous, greedy and tenacious; this Religion shall quickly make him liberal and generous. It will make the cowardly and timerous, to become bold and venturous; the lustful and intemperate, to turn chaste and sober; the cruel and revengeful to grow merciful and placable. In one word, it works a perfect change and alteration, making the wicked and injurious, to become forthwith most innocent and holy men. For all manner of sin is renounced at their entrance, all filthy habits are wash'd off at the Font, and never again resumed. They are so wholly altered in their life and temper by embracing of our Faith, that you will scarce know them to be the same men* Thus were the *Christians* in those days, the holiest sort of men, and the most noble patterns of Vertue and Goodness: Being (c) *distinguishable from other men*, as *Tertullian* says, *in nothing so much as this, That they had left off all their former vices.* For they lived what they taught, and performed what others only could discourse of; their common *Motto* being this, (d) *Although we have not the skill to talk, yet we have the Grace to live as well as any.* Nay, their very *enemies* themselves, who would be sure to spare no pains nor skill

(b) *Dei autem præcepta, quantum valeant in animis hominum, quotidiana experimenta demonstrant. Da mihi virum qui sit iracundus, maledicus, effrænatus: paucissimis Dei verbis tam placidum quam ovem reddam. Da cupidum, avarum, tenacem; jam tibi eum liberalem dabo, & pecuniam suam plenis manibus largientem. Da timidum doloris ac mortis; jam cruces, & ignes, & Phalaridis taurum contemnet. Da libidinosum, adulterum ganeonem; jam sobrium, castum, continentem videbis. Da crudelem & sanguinis appetentem; jam in veram clementiam furor ille mutabitur. Da injustum insipientem, peccatorem continuo & æquus, & prudens, & innocens erit. Uno enim lavacro malicia omnis abolebitur; pauca Dei præcepta sic totum hominem immutant, & exposito vetere, novum reddunt, ut non cognoscas eundem esse.* Lactan. de Fals. Scap. l. 3. c. 26.

(c) *Non aliunde noscibiles, quam de emendatione vitiorum priſtinorum*, Tertul. ad Scap. c. 2.

(d) *Non magna loquimur, sed vivimus.* Cypr. de bono patientiæ. Ed. Rig. p. 222.

skill in fastening some *immoralities* upon them, were yet forced at last to confess that they had no Fault but one; and that was, that they were *called Christians*. For it is a known Story and Usage which *Tertullian* complains of, that the very Heathens themselves could not but cry out, (e) *Such or such a one is a very good Man, 'bating only this That he is a Christian.*

And when the World of Christians were thus entirely obedient, and compleatly vertuous; it was no wonder that they could so bravely despise *Death*, and not only *suffer*, but even *seek* and (f) *provoke Martyrdom*. They durst die for the Gospel, because they were sure to (g) live by it. For they perform'd all that it required, and were thereby secure of all the Happiness which it promised: And when by this means death was become to them only a Passage to a most glorious and eternal Life; it had nothing in it that could fright them. All *Sorts*, *Sexes*, and *Ages*, had lived their Religion so well, that they feared not to die for it; but with the most undaunted Courage, and (h) assured Hope, they every where in great numbers sealed their Profession with their Blood, and gave Testimony to the Truth of their Faith with their own Lives.

(e) *Bonus vir Caius Sejus, sed malus tantum quod Christianus* Tertul. Apol. c. 3.

(f) *Quid facies de tantis millibus hominum, tot viris ac fœminis omnis Sexûs, omnis Dignitatis, offerentibus se tibi?* Tertul. ad Scap. c. 4.

(g) ἐγγὺς μαχαίρας, ἐγγὺς θεῦ, μεταξὺ θηρίων, μεταξὺ θεοῦ. Ignat. Epist ad Smyrn. (h) ἀμέλευστόν τινα ἐν πεποιθήσει πίστεως ἀγαθῇ, is S. *Clement*'s Character of good Men. 1 *Ep. ad Cor.* 1. 26.

And now, if we fall short of that Obedience that God requires, and which was performed by former Ages; whose Fault is that, or who must in reason suffer for it? For Christ's Gospel is the very same that it was *sixteen* hundred years ago, the Precepts are still unchanged, and the Penalty altogether unaltered. It always was, and always will be the same Rule of Faith, and the same Measure of Mercy or Damnation. And therefore if we lose what it promises, we may thank our selves for neglecting what it enjoyns. For the same terms of Life have stood fixt hitherto, and shall stand through all Ages; the *primitive* Christians kept them, and were saved by them; and if we break them, we shall certainly be condemned for them.

How small soever therefore that be, which in these loose times *men perform*; yet an entire Obedience is that, which *God* indispensibly *enjoyns*. It is the peremptory Demand of his Gospel, and will at the last Day

be the inviolable Rule of his Judgment. It saved the *ancient Christians*, and less than it nothing will save *us*.

But this some will be ready to say, instead of a *gracious* and *merciful*, is a very *rigorous* and *severe* Condition, It binds us to more than is in our Power, and threatens us for what we cannot help, and is a Task too heavy for any *meer man*, and proportioned only to the strength of an *Angel*. For to obey *all God's Laws*, and that *at all times*, who is sufficient? God's Laws themselves are not Rules so general, as to admit of no exception. For we are commanded, for instance, to live in *peace*; but yet sometimes we *may*, and *must* be engaged in *striving* and *contention*. And as it is in *this*, so it is in *other* parts of Duty; the Commandment holds not in every Case, but some are excepted. And who now is of an Understanding so discerning and sagacious, as to see in all things where he is fast and where he is loose, and never to mistake that for his Liberty, which is indeed his Duty? To be infallible in Judgment, and to think right in all things, is the property of a God, not of a Man; and if through this weakness of Understanding, whereto all Mankind are subject, we are ignorant at any Time and do not see, or *erroneous* and mistake our Duty; how is it possible that we should in *all Instances*, and at all times, *perform* and *fulfil* it?

But even where we do know God's Law, yet neither there can we always observe it. For since we have many other things to do besides our Duty, and Opportunities for Action call frequently upon the sudden; we are oft-times drawn to act before we have time to think, and so, although we know what we should do in the *general*, yet in this *particular* Case we have not leisure to *attend* to it. We are surprized into Action e're we are aware, and perform before we can consider; and therefore, as the Chance happens, many times do ill, because we have not time to look about us, and to see what is well doing.

But if an Opportunity for some sin, happen, when we are at leisure to consider of it, and to avoid it; yet many times, although for the *present* it doth not, *afterwards* it shall win upon us. For all Temptations do not come upon us suddenly, and pass away as suddenly again;

again; but some *stay long* with us, and persist to obtrude themselves upon us. And although we can consider for a while, and watch well, and resist long; yet such is the Imperfection of our very Faculties, that they cannot be held long at a Stretch, but they will at last grow *weary*. They will be tired out by continuing so strict a Guard, and begin at last to remit of their Care, and to slacken their Diligence; and when they unbend, the Temptation increases, and our Lusts take Advantage; so that albeit we were not surprized at first, yet we shall at last, and be tired and wearied into a Transgression.

And since all these, with others, are Infirmities not only *incident* to, but *inseparable* from our Natures, and such as we cannot throw off till we shake off our Bodies, and all Converse with the tempting World: How can it be thus exacted of us, who cannot always stand upright, that we should never fall but obey God intirely, in *all things*, and at *all times*?

But to give a clear answer to these Difficulties, which are here with great Truth objected; having shewn, that *Obedience is the Condition which is indispensibly required of us*, and *what those particular Laws are which we are to obey*, and *what degrees and measures of Obedience is required to them*: I shall now proceed to enquire into that which I promised in the next place, *viz. What are the Mitigations and Allowances of this Condition of Happiness, and what those Defects are which it bears and dispenses with*; of which in the next Book.

BOOK IV.

Shewing what Defects are consistent with a Regenerate State, and dispensed with in the Gospel.

CHAP. I.

Shewing in general that some sins are consistent with a State of Grace.

THat Measure of Life or Death which Christ has indispensibly fixed for all his Servants, is not a *perfect entire*, and *absolutely unerring* Obedience. No, it makes *Allowances* for the *unconquerable Frailties*, and *unavoidable Infirmities* of our Natures. It considers that we are but Men, and exacts no more of us than a humane Service. That Integrity, which, as we have seen, it requires of us, is an entire Obedience only of our *free* Works, and *deliberate chosen* Actions. For then we are *perfect* and *entire* in God's account, when we have done all that was in our Power, and have no wilful Stain upon us; when we have no other Blemish, than what the unwill'd weakness of our Nature, and the very Frame and Circumstances of our Constitution have made necessary. And therefore every Transgression whatsoever, whether *with* our Wills, or *without* and *beside* them, doth not presently blot us out of the Book of Life, and put us out of a state of Grace and Salvation. No, some defects there are, which do not overthrow, but consist with it.

To give a clear account of this, I will shew these *two* things.

1. In the *general*, that *some Slips and Transgressions* are *consistent with a state of Salvation*, and *dispensed* with

by

by the *Gospel Covenant*; so that although a man die before he has amended them, and is reformed from them, yet he shall not at the Day of Judgment be condemned for them.

2. More *particularly what*, and of *what nature*, those consistent Slips and Transgressions are.

1. I say in the *general*, that *some Slips and Transgressions are consistent with a State of Salvation, and are not eternally threatned, but graciously tolerated and dispensed with by the Covenant of the Gospel.* And therefore if a Man die in them before he has perfectly amended them, he shall not be condemned for them.

Now as for this, the absolute *Necessity of Humane Nature* makes it evident. For such a State of unerring Obedience and impeccability, cannot here be performed by any Man, whether *Heathen*, *Jew*, or *Christian*; and therefore it cannot be required of him. No Man of any Religion whatsoever, can do it; and so God cannot, he will not exact it.

For of this all Men may be fully satisfied, from that Assurance of *God's Goodness*, which is common to all Religions in the World, that he never commands Impossibilities, or enjoins Men to do that which is not to be done. He doth not require a Beast, to be as perfect as a Man; or lay that Load upon a Man, which is fit only for the Strength of an Angel. For to do thus, were to act the part of a severe Task-Master, and a cruel Imposer; but by no means to use the Authority, of a loving and a gracious Lord. It were indeed to reap where he has not sown, and to call for that which he has never given; and to command and order, reward or punish, not to promote Obedience, but only to shew Power; not according to men's Deserts, but only according to his own Will. For if he should bind impossibilities upon us by a Law, and establish it with Penalties, he could not be thought to prescribe a Rule of Action, since no man can act after it; nor to fix a measure of Judgment, since it being in no Man's Choice to break or to perform, no man can justly be judged by it; but only to seek a palpable Pretence of unjust Force and arbitrary Cruelty. Because it is all one to torment and punish a Man without any Law, as to punish him for the Breach of that, which it was never possible

sible for him to perform. For there can be no Fault, where there is no ability; and a *Tree* is as much in fault for not walking when it is bidden, or a *Stone* for not discoursing; as a Man is for not doing that, which it is above his Power to do. So that whatsoever a man in such case is punished for, will fall at length upon God himself; because whatsoever he suffers, it is not for that he *would* not, but that he *could* not help it; which in very deed is to suffer Punishment, for being no better, or abler, than God was pleased to make him.

(a) *Quis peccat in eo quod nullo modo caveri potest?* Aug. de lib. Arbit. l. c. 18.

Whatsoever therefore no Man can (a) avoid, no Man shall ever be punished for. Because God cannot be offended with Infirmities of his own making, nor angry at his own Workmanship, since that were in reality and reason to be angry at himself.

And thus much, I say, *all the world* may be convinced of in this Matter, from that common Assurance, which all Men either have, or may have, of *God's Justice* and *Natural Goodness*.

But then as for us *Christians*, we are assured that God cannot injoyn Impossiblities, or make that an indispensible Condition of his Covenant, which the best of us all is not able to come up to; because such Dealings would not only contradict the *Goodness* and *Justice of his Nature*, which is enough to make an honest *Jew* or *Heathen*, to abhor the Thoughts of it, but would moreover thwart and destroy all the Ends of the Gospel, and the Declarations of Grace. For if the Covenant of the Gospel, or of Grace it self, should exact that which no Christian can perform, and damn them for what they cannot help; it were no Covenant of Grace and Mercy, nor any favour at all to Men, seeing it would leave them just where it found them, and not put them into one *jot* the better Case than they were in before it came. Christ could never have called himself *the way*, if no Man could walk in it; or *the* (b *life*, if none were ever able to live by him. The *Angels* had never sung (c) *joy to all people* at his Birth, if that Joy had been set so far above us, that the tallest of us all could not reach up to it; nor have proclaimed upon his coming into the World, (d) *on earth peace, and good will towards men*; if yet after all that he has done and suffered for us, we are still left in such a case, that what none of us all can help

(b) John 14. 6.
(c) Luke 2. 10.
(d) V. 14.

he p shall put *God* and *Us* into a state of *ill-will* and *enmity*. How could he have been called a *Jesus*, or a (*e*) *Saviour*; if he proffered salvation upon such strict terms, as no man could ever hope to be saved by? Or (*f*) *Grace* and *Truth* have been truly affirmed to come by him, and the preaching of his Religion be called a *Gospel* or (*g*) *Glad-tidings*; if the conditions of it were so very hard, as that no man could perform them? To make such Offers of Grace, as none were able to accept of, had not been to relieve our necessities, but to deride them; and that which in the Apostle's judgment is a most gross *absurdity*, would have been in reality a most certain truth; (*viz.*) that *all their preaching was vain*, and *our faith is vain also*, 1 Cor. 15. 14, 17.

(*e*) Mat. 1. 21. (*f*) John 1. 17. (*g*) εὐαγγέλιον.

Nay, I add further, so far are all the Laws of Christ from being an *impossible* task; that to us *Christians*, who are strengthned by those assistances which *Christ* affords, and his *Gospel* promises, they are neither *grievous* nor *extream difficult*, but a burden *fair* and *easie* to be born. *His Commandments*, saith St. *John*, *are not grievous*, 1 Joh. 5. 3. And our Lord himself, who best knew the measures both of *our Natures*, and of his *own Grace*, declares expressly, that *his Yoke* of Precepts is *easie*, or (*h*) gracious and favourable, *and his burthen light*: Upon which inducement, he exhorts all men with the greater willingness to *take it upon them*, and submit to it *Mat.* 11. 30.

(*h*) χρηστός.

This then all Religions in the world, and we Christians above any, either are, or may be undoubtedly assured of, that no man is indispensibly bound to do, what no man can do; and that those things cannot be enjoyn'd, which can never be perform'd.

But now, to live wholly without sin, in an impeccable and unerring obedience; to go on exactly straight in God's way without the least wandring, and to tread always firm in the paths of righteousness without ever slipping: to walk so uprightly as never to fall, neither by security or rashness, inadvertency or weakness, surprize or weariness, is more than humane nature can do, and is a Task, not for a Man, but an Angel.

And that some slips and transgressions of this nature, are such, as *no* man of what Religion soever, whether *Gentile*, *Jew*, or *Christian*, can avoid; is plain, because no meer man ever yet *did* avoid them.

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It was an undeniable Argument of *Atticus* in St. *Jerome*, (i) *Give an instance of some man that did it; or else confess that no meer man yet ever could do it.* For since there is both an utter necessity, and a severe Commandment requiring it; it cannot be but that some of all mankind, when they had so much reason, and so infinite inducement, should have endeavoured to the utmost, and have done it, if the doing of it had been within the power of humane nature. So that if it be a failing inseparable from the practice of every man, we must conclude it to be unconquerable by the humane nature also.

(i) *Da exemplum qui absque peccato fuerit in perpetuum, aut confitere imbecilitatem tuam.* Jerom. lib. 1. Dial. adv. Pel. *paulo ab initio.*

But now as for this inability of performing in every instance, and transgressing at no time, it has been the complaint of *all Persons*, in *all Religions*, throughout *all ages* of the world.

For as for the bravest men among the *Heathens*, we have *Seneca*, their greatest Moralist, confessing freely.

(k) *Peccamus omnes alii gravia, alii leviora, alii ex destinatio, alii forte impulsi, aut alienâ nequitiâ ablati: alii in bonis consiliis parum fortiter stetimus, & innocentiam inviti, ac renitentes perdimus. Nec delinquimus tantum, sed usque ad extremum ævi deliquemus. Etiam si quis tam bene purgavit animum, ut nihil eum obturbare amplius possit, ac fallere; ad innocentiam tamen peccando pervenit.* Sen. de clem. lib. 1. cap. 6.

(k) *We have all sinned more or less*, says he even of his own Country Laws. For *some have sinned in great matters, some in little, some out of choice and design, some through constraint, or through the ill example and seduction of others. Some have been too easily driven from good purposes, and sinned, tho' it were against their wills. Nay, we have not only transgressed thus far, but, what augments our misery, we shall continue still to transgress so long as we have breath in our bodies. Yea if there be any man who hath so well cleansed his soul, as that no temptation can win upon him; yet has he run through a long train of sins before he attained to that pitch of innocence.* (l) *Let us persuade our selves of this in the first place,* says he again, *that we are all sinners. For what man is he that dare say he has broken none even of his Country Laws? But granting that he had kept all them,*

(l) *Hoc primum nobis suademus, neminem nostrûm esse sine culpâ. Quis iste est qui se profitetur omnibus legibus innocentem? Et ut hoc ita sit, quam angusta innocentia est ad legem bonum esse? quam multa pietas, humanitas, liberalitas, fides, justitia exigunt? quæ omnia extra publicas tabulas sunt.* Id. de irâ, lib. 2. cap. 27.

them, yet how scanty and defective an innocence is that, to have done only all that good which they oblige to? For how many things are required, and not performed, by the Divine Law of Piety, of Humanity, of Liberality, of Justice, of Fidelity? Of all which whether we keep or break them, the Laws of our Nation take no notice.

And as for the Jews, we find *David* the man after God's heart crying out, *Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from my secret faults*, Psal. 19. 12. And *Solomon*, who was the wisest and most knowing man that ever was upon the earth, lays it down for an Aphorism of universal observation, that *there is not a just man upon earth* so perfect as always to *do good and never sin*, Eccl. 7. 20.

Nay even the *Disciples of Christ* themselves, who had the noblest encouragements, and the greatest assistances for a most compleat and entire obedience, of any men whatsoever; could never yet attain to such a state, as to obey universally without ever slipping. The *Holy Fathers* in the *African Councils* felt this by themselves, and were so deeply sensible of it from their own experience, and from what they heard and presumed of others; that they condemned it as a *proud* error, for any man to think or speak otherwise. (*m*) *To say that our Nature is as perfect as ever* Adam's *was*, and that any man now may live, if he will all his life long without sin, and has the same free liberty that Adam *had in Paradise never to do amiss*; is an error *that stands condemned by the holy Councils.* And what these good men thus ingenuously confessed, all others have constantly complained of; there being none among them, who was ever able to live up so exactly to the Precepts of the Gospel, as not to do against them in any instance. No, that was the sole Prerogative of the man Christ Jesus, who in that respect had no other man to whom he could be likened. For he was made like unto us in all other things, *save only in sin*, which we all had more or less, but *he wanted*, Heb. 2. 17. and chap. 7. 26.

(m) *Et Quoniam tales nascantur nunc quoq; qualis Ille fuit nostri Generis pater ante reatum: Posse hominem sine peccato decurrere vitam Si velit, ut potuit nullo delinquere primus Libertate sua: nempe hæc damnata fateris Conciliis* —— Prosper lib. de Ingrat. contra Pelag. cap. 9.

And since this state of *unerring obedience*, is such as in this life no man *can* because no meer man ever yet *did* attain unto; we may be sure, that God doth not indispensibly

penſibly require it. But ſome infirmities the Goſpel muſt of neceſſity diſpenſe with, becauſe according to the preſent circumſtances of humane Nature, we cannot help all; ſome muſt be pardoned, ſince all cannot be eſcaped.

But beſides all that hath been already ſaid, to ſhew the conſiſtence of ſome failings with a ſtate of ſalvation, becauſe of the unavoidable weakneſs of humane Nature, which cannot perfectly get quit of them: We may add this further, which will evidence it beyond all exception, that the *beſt Saints* of God, and the unqueſtionable heirs of happineſs, have always lived ſubject to them. Thoſe very men, who are moſt certainly gone to Heaven, went thither with ſome of theſe ſlips and infirmities about them. They could not plead an unerring obedience; but yet, notwithſtanding all their errors, they had a right to all the Promiſes of the Goſpel. They died happily, altho' they could not live wholly without offence. So that ſome ſins do not in any wiſe deſtroy a *Saint*, or ſubvert the hopes and happineſs of a good Man, but can and do conſiſt with them.

And in the proof of this, the Scriptures are many, and plain. Holy *Job*, who maintained his own Integrity to be ſuch, as God would accept and approve of, more ſtoutly, it may be, than any man ever did; confeſſes notwithſtanding a number of ſins, for which although God of his abundant Grace and Mercy *would* not, yet if he would, he *might* contend with him. *How ſhall man*, ſays he, *be juſt with God? If he will contend with him, he cannot anſwer him* ſo much as *one of a thouſand. If I juſtifie* my ſelf in the unerringneſs of my obedience, *my own mouth ſhall condemn me; if I ſay* before him that *I am perfect* and have ſinned in nothing, *it ſhould alſo*, by ſuch confeſſions as he would extort from me, *prove me perverſe*, Job 9. 2, 3, 20. And *David*, a man after God's own heart, acknowledges freely that he is guilty not only of ſeveral ſins which he remembers, but alſo of many more which he doth not know of: *Who can underſtand his errors? cleanſe thou me from my ſecret faults* Pſal. 19. 12. Nay, even *Paul* the *Apoſtle*, who at that time was a moſt undoubted Heir of Heaven, doth yet own freely, that as *yet* he had *not attained to perfection, but only endeavoured after it*, Phil. 3. 12, 13. But although he were not ſo perfect. as to obey without all error, and

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to offend in no instance; yet had he as much perfection as the Gospel exacts, and such as the best men on earth attain to. For at the fifteenth Verse, he calls upon *as many as be perfect* in such measure as the Gospel accepts of, *to be thus minded* as he was, *and forgetting those things* whereto they had already attain'd, *which were* now *behind*; *to press on* towards that higher perfection still wanting, *which was* yet *before* them, as he told them he himself did, *vers.* 13.

And since men of this full growth and high pitch in goodness, could never yet get free of these unavoidable infirmities; it cannot be expected, that others who are endowed with a more imperfect Grace and a lower Vertue, should ever live entirely above them. No, alas! God himself declares plainly by the mouth of his inspired Servants, that no man yet ever did attain so far. *There is no man*, saith *Solomon*, *that sins not*, 1 Kings. 8. 46. And *Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am wholly pure from my sin?* Prov. 20. 9. No man certainly, not the most nobly good and eminently vertuous themselves. For *there is not a just man upon earth, that doth good, and sinneth not*, Eccles. 7. 20. The blessed Saints who are now in Heaven, could never get perfectly free from sin, 'till they got thither. For it is only in Heaven, *the new Jerusalem, where the Spirits of just men are made perfect*, Heb. 12. 23. But so long as we continue here on earth, let us aspire after that pitch of Righteousness never so much, yet such is the inseparable infirmity of our nature, we shall still fall short of it. Be favourable in censuring one anothers faults, says St. *James*, because every man will need that favour from others towards his own faults more or less; *for in many things we offend all*, Jam. 3. 1, 2. Whatever some may falsly pretend, yet in reality no man lives entirely innocent. For *if we say that we have no sin we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us*, 1 John 1. 8. We are never able to shew this height of obedience, nor doth Christ's Gospel exact it of us. For even there we are taught in our *daily* prayers to confess our * *daily trespasses*; and yet notwithstanding that, we are allow'd, nay, commanded in the same breath to call God *our Father* still, *Mat.* 6. 9, 12.

* *Ne quis sibi quasi innocens placeat, cum innocens nemo sit, & se extollendo plus pereat; instruitur & docetur peccare se quotidie, dum quotidie pro peccatis jubetur orare.* Cyp. de Orat. Dom. in hanc petitionem, p. 195.

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As for *some slips* and *transgressions* therefore, we see plainly in *the General*, that they are consistent with a state of salvation, and are not eternally threatned, but dispensed with by the Covenant of the Gospel. For the *infirmity of our Nature is such, that we never can*; and *God's goodness is so great, that he never will require us, to be entirely free from them. The very best men*, and *those very Saints who are now in Bliss, have lived subject to them, and fallen under them: but yet they made no blot in their character, nor robbed them of God's favour, and that life and pardon which is promised in the Gospel.* And that we may be certain is consistent, which as we plainly see, not only *needs must*, but indeed *always has* consisted, with a state of mercy and Regeneration. For the terms of the Gospel are the same to all times; and what they bear with in *one*, they do likewise in another. God is no *respecter of Persons*, nor can ever render *different* judgment to them, who have done the *same* things. So that as for some sins, we are fully assured from the foregoing considerations, that they are not eternally threatned, but dispensed with by the Covenant of the Gospel; and that so long as we are free from others, if we die in them, without amending them, we shall not at the last day be condemned for them.

But to clear up this business more fully, I shall proceed now to what I undertook in the *second* place; namely, to shew *more particularly what*, and of *what Nature, those allowed slips* and *transgressions are*; whereof I shall discourse in the *ensuing* Chapters.

CHAP. II.

Of the Nature of these consistent Slips more particularly.

IF any man should ask, which of all Christ's Laws those are, which he may *keep* or *break* at his own pleasure, and yet go *unpunished*? I must tell him, none at all. For there are no failings and transgressions in a man's

man's life allowed of for this reason, because disobedience is warranted to some Laws, although it be not to others. No, in our whole Religion, there is no one Law, that is left so naked. For God has not given any Commandments with that indifference to them, as if he cared not what became of them, or were unconcern'd whether men kept or broke them; but he has established them all under the same penalty, so that *he who breaks any one, is guilty*, as *S. James* says, and obnoxious to the punishment *of all*, Jam. 2. 10. It is not therefore the transgression of some Laws which shall be born with, but not of others; for that which gets an allowance for the breach of one, would procure a favourable sentence for the like violation of any of the rest.

That then, which makes the difference of *punishable* and *unpunishable* in mens failings, is not to be sought for in *Christ's Laws*, seeing the punishment of every one of them is the same; but in their *own actions*. For some sins shall be born with, not for that they are against a Law, whereto no penalty is annexed, there being none such in all Christ's Gospel; but for that they are such imperfect actions, as the punishing Law, which they are against, will not take hold of. Every Law of Christ threatens death, but these allowed offences are not of the number of those actions, which are threatned by it.

For we must take notice, that those works of ours, whereon Christ's Laws lay restraint, and whereto they, as all other just Laws in the World, threaten punishment, are our *voluntary* and *chosen* actions. They bind us up in all those performances, which are placed in our own free power, and come from the choice of our own will; and they denounce woes to us if in them we go beyond those bounds which they have set us. So that in all our free and chosen actions, we must take care to do what the Law requires, and to keep back from what it forbids; and we are sure to suffer if we neglect it. For it is among these actions of choice, where the Law reigns, on which it lays Commands, and whereto it threatens punishment. If we chuse and do what is commanded, then through the Grace of the Gospel, have we a right to the promised reward; and if we chuse to do what is forbidden, then are we guilty and obnoxious

to the punishment denounced. But as for other actions which flow not from our own choice, of which sort are all our pardonable and allow'd infirmities, they fall not under the *strict* force of the Law, either in the guidance of its *Command*, or in the sting of its *Punishment*; so that at the last day, it will not be judged to have been either broken, or kept by them.

That I may fully clear up this, whereupon so much of that which I shall say under this *Head* depends, I will shew concerning it these *two* things.

1. That *all things whatsoever, which are either good or evil in us, and a fit matter of reward or punishment, are made such by a Law.*

2. That all our *actions are not governed by God's Laws, so as to be strictly and directly, either enjoyned or prohibited, punished or rewarded by them; but only those among them, which are voluntary and chosen.*

1. I say, *All things whatsoever which are either good or evil, rewardable or punishable in us, are made so by some Law.* For *good* and *evil*, *vertue* and *vice*, *obedience* and *sin*, which are only so many different Names for the same thing, have all relation to a *Commandment*. *Vertue* and *obedience* is the *performance*, as *vice* and *sin* is the *transgression* of it. *Where there is no law*, saith the Apostle, *there is no transgression*, Rom. 4. 15. And *no man sins*, as saith another Apostle, but *he that trangresseth the Law; for sin is the transgression of the Law*, 1 Joh 3. 4. And as *Law* is the measure of *sin* and *duty*, so it is likewise of *reward* and *punishment*. For God never afflicts and torments the Children of men, out of the *inclination* of his *Nature*, but only out of the *necessity* of *Government*. He is the Ruler of the World, and the Lord of Men; and therefore he must maintain his own Laws and punish the evil Doers. But no man is ever punished without an offence, and he must do evil before he suffer it. He undergoes nothing but that which is his own choice; for he chose rather to incur the penalty, than to perform the Commandment. He feels no more than the Law denounced; for God the Judge executes nothing but what the Law threatens; he punishes according to it, but not without it. And the Law doth always make a penalty due to an Offender, before he either *can*, or *doth* exact it.

Thus

Thus are all things, which are either *good* or *evil*, *rewardable* or *punishable* in us, *made such by a Law*. But then,

2. As for *our actions, all of them are not govern'd by God's Law, so as to be strictly, either enjoyned or prohibited, punished or rewarded by them; but only those among them, which are voluntary and chosen.* And this being a Point, whereof I shall make so much use in all that follows, I will spend the more time in clearing of it up, as I hope, beyond all question, by shewing the truth of it.

1. From *the clear reason of the thing it self.*

2. From *the plain declarations of the Scripture concerning it.*

1. I say, That *only our voluntary and chosen actions are under the restraint of Laws*, and *either enjoyned or prohibited, punished or rewarded by them, is plain from the great and convincing reason of the thing it self.* For let us consider,

First, The very *nature of a Law*, and we shall find, that in all those actions, whereon it is imposed, it supposes them who exert them, to have a *power of choice*, and a free liberty of making them, either a piece of service to it, or a transgression of it. For all Law is a *Bond* or a *Tye*, which lays restraint upon us, and induces *Obligation.* So that in all those actions, whereupon the restraint is laid, we are necessarily supposed to be free before it comes. For it is an utter absurdity to go to bind any thing by a Law, which is before necessitated by its very Nature. Who would ever be so vain and foolish, as to give a Law to a *Stone*, that it should not speak? Or to a *Tree*, that it should not walk? Or to the *Fire*, that it should not chill and freeze him? There can be no place for, nor need of an Obligation, where there is no choice and liberty. For it is only where things have a power to act on *both* sides, that there is room for a Law, to oblige and tye them up to act on *one.* And for this reason it is, that among all that variety of Creatures which inhabit in this lower World, *men* alone are capable of Laws, because no Creature besides, is endowed with freedom of will and liberty of choice, which is to be bound up and restrained by them.

Nay, even in men themselves, those actions and tempers, which are not subject to their own *choice*, nor under the power of their own *wills*, are no fit matter of

a Law, nor fall under the force of a Commandment. For who can ever be so unreasonable and void of all sense, as to command a man, that he should not be born *rich* or *poor*, *base* or *noble*; that he should not be *sick* and *weak*, *hungry* and *thirsty*, *sleepy* or *weary*? No, since none of these Instances is in his own choice, or under the free disposal of his own will, in none of them is he capable of an Obligation.

Seeing then, that it is of the nature of every Law, to be given as a Bond and Obligation to us in such Actions, to which otherwise our will is free, and able either to chuse or refuse them; it is plain, the Laws are intended for a restraint upon us, only in our voluntary and chosen Actons. For there are none else wherein we are free, and therefore none besides wherein they should intend to bind us.

Secondly, That only our voluntary and chosen actions are under the restraint and punishment of Laws, is plain from *that way*, *which all the Laws have of obliging men.* The Law is no *Law* to us, but where it obligeth; and all its *Obligation*, is only upon our *chosen actions.* For it can no otherwise oblige us to any act, than by obliging us to will and chuse it.

For our wills are the disposers of our actions, seeing we work at our own choice, and do what we will and like our selves; and to oblige and engage our actions, a Law must oblige and engage our wills first. But now, as for all the obligation which any thing can possibly lay upon our wills, it is not by way of *necessitating*, *compulsive force*, but only of *moving* and *exciting Arguments.* Because from the very constitution of our nature, our will cannot be forced by any Bond, but only moved of it self to chuse that, which it is intended to be bound to; so that in its nature, it is capable of being obliged to nothing which is unchosen. For the will of man is not a subject capable of natural force, or bodily violence; a man may as soon hope to grasp a shadow, or to lay violent hands upon an Angel, as to engage it that way. No it is no Body, nor bodily Faculty; so that it is not subject to any *physical force*, to be bound hand and foot by a Law, as a Thief is by a Chain; but the only possible way whereby to work upon it, is to win it by *Arguments.* It must determine its

its own Choice, ſince other things cannot determine it; and therefore ſuch things muſt be ſuggeſted and propoſed to it, as can perſwade, but nothing that can force and compel it.

For this indeed is all the Hold, that any Law can have upon the Will of Man; *it naturally wills and chuſes what is good, and hates and refuſes what is evil.* And this gives a Law ſome Power over it, in binding it to chuſe what the Law-giver has a mind it ſhould, if he firſt make it *deſirable.* He may win it in its own way, viz. *If he makes Obedience to become its Intereſt*, and ſhew it plainly, that it can be no gainer by Diſobedience, but that it is by far the better for it to *chuſe* what he enjoyns, than to *refuſe* it. For the Will's own proper Motion, and natural way of Working, carries it on to deſire and chuſe that which appears to be good, and to fly and refuſe that which is known to be evil. And therefore when the things propoſed in the Law, have a moſt deſirable good annexed to the Performance, and a moſt hateful Evil joyned with the Tranſgreſſion of them; this is an Engagement and tye upon it indeed to chuſe the Duty for the goodneſs-ſake, and to avoid the Sin for the evil that accompanies it. It binds it ſo far, as its own Deſires and Inclinations, Hopes and Fears can bind it; and lays Obedience in the way to that, which it loves and ſeeks; ſo that if it would come at that, there is no other Means, but this muſt be the way to it.

And this is the way, whereby all Laws oblige us. For they are backed with ſuch Rewards and Puniſhments, as make it every Man's Advantage to do what they enjoin him. The evil of Diſobedience is always greater, yea, in caſe of the Divine Laws, infinitely greater, than the evil of obeying; ſo that if the Wills of Men chuſe in their own way, and will be wrought upon by their own Motive, they muſt determine themſelves to that whereto the Laws would bind them. And this ſecuring of that which is commanded, by making it far worſe for any Man to break than to fulfil it, is abſolutely neceſſary, and naturally inſeparable from all Laws. For a frightful Penalty, is either expreſly mentioned, or if not, it is always implyed. If the Puniſhment is ſet down, then they who tranſgreſs muſt ſuffer what the Law threatens; but if it be not,

they must undergo what the Legislator pleases. So that *Punishment* can never be pulled away from *Law*, but if there be a Command given, which makes no Penalty due, nor creates a Right of inflicting any; it has only the *Name* of a Law or Commandment, but that is all, for it contradicts its *Nature*. A *Request* or *Entreaty* it may be, a *Counsel* or *Advice*; but a *Law* or *Command* it never is.

And seeing all Obligation to Action, is only an Obligation upon our Wills, to make them chuse to act, rather than to omit what the Law intends to oblige them to; 'tis plain, that where there is no room for Will and Choice, there is none likewise for Law and Obligation. For we cannot *will* and *chuse* those Actions, which are *unchosen*: And therefore we cannot be *moved* or *obliged* by any Law, to will or chuse them.

And thus it appears, both from the *Nature of Law*, and from the *Force of Obligation*, both which are *antecedently* necessary to make up the Nature of *Sin* or *Obedience*, that all the *Restraint* which is laid, and all the *Punishments* which are inflicted by Laws, are only upon our *voluntary* and *chosen* Actions.

And this will yet further appear, if we consider some other things, which are *consequent* to Sin or Obedience, and ensue upon the Working or Commission of them; as are,

Thirdly, *Rewards* and *Punishments*, *Commendation* and *Reproof*. Every *Lawgiver* commends and rewards those who keep his Laws, and punishes and reproves all such as break and transgress them. But now all this can have place only upon their * voluntary Actions, which were at their own Choice, and in their own Liberty either to have exerted, or omitted. For no Actions can be imputed to a Man, either for him or against him, further than they depended on him. Because there is no thanks at all due to him, for doing that which he could not avoid; nor any Charge at all capable to be brought against him, for failing to do what we could not do. Who would ever be so absurd, as to reprove and punish a Man, for being *low of Stature*, or *weak of Body*, τοῦτο γινόμενος. εἰ δὲ καὶ ὑπῆρχε, δικαίως κολάσεως ἐτύγχανεν, οὐκ ἀφ' ἑαυτῷ τοιοῦτον ὤν, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν δυνάμενος εἶναι ἕτερον παρ' ὃ ἐγεγόνει. Just. Mart. Apol. 2. p. 81.

* οὐδὲ γὰρ ἦν ἄξιον ἀμοιβῆς ἢ ἐπαίνου ἄνθρωπον οὐκ ἀφ' ἑαυτῷ ἐλόμενον τὸ ἀγαθόν, ἀλλὰ

for

for being *born of mean Persons*, or to a *small Fortune?* These and all other things of like Nature, which a Man could never help, may be his *Misfortunes*, but not his *Fault*; and whatsoever he suffers upon the account of them, may be, and often is, his *Calamity*, but by no means his *Punishment*. If he is blamed for them, when it never was in his Power to hinder them, the Imputation laid on him rests not *there*, but falls all upon *that Cause*, whose free Pleasure it was so to order him. Agreeably whereunto the *Wise Man* tells us, That *whosoever mocketh the Poor, reproacheth* not him, who cannot help his Poverty, but *his Maker*, whose Pleasure it was to dispose of him in that Condition, *Prov.* 17. 5. And as he can bear no *just Blame*, so neither can he undergo any *just Punishment* for the same. *Barbarous Cruelty* indeed he may fall under, which would have taken place without a Law, as well as with it; but *legal* and *just Penalties*, he never can.

And seeing no Action is *punishable* but what is *chosen*, it is plain, that the Laws of God impose restraint, and threaten Punishment, only to our *voluntary* Actions.

Which will still further appear, from another effect of every *sinful* and *punishable* Action; namely this,

Fourthly, That it is such, for which our own *Consciences will blame and condemn us*, and which we shall lament in *Repentance* and *Remorse*. One great part, even of *Hell-Torments*, is this *Remorse* and *Worm of Conscience*. For there is no Action, for which we shall be punished there, but, when it is too late, we shall endlessly repent of it. *Their Worm* there, as our Saviour saith, *dying not*, Mark 9. 44. But now it is an utter Absurdity, and downright Madness, for any Man to be angry at himself for that, which he could never help, and to repent that ever he committed that, which it was not in his Power to hinder. For doth it ever repent any Man that he is not *tall of Stature*, that he was not born as *strong as Sampson*, or made *immortal as an Angel?* Was any Man ever touched with Remorse, because he breaths, and sleeps, and thirsts, and hungers? No Man ever is, or ever can with Reason be angry at himself, but when he sees that he has been wanting to himself; when he has done that, which it was in his own Choice to have

done otherwise. For all Remorse is for a willing Offence: A Man chuses it when he commits it, and therefore, when afterwards he sees his Error, he condemns himself for it.

And since a Man's own Conscience condemns him for all those things, for which God's Law will punish him, and no Man can condemn himself for doing any thing but what he chose to do: Neither his own Conscience can condemn, nor the Law punish him, for any but his voluntary and chosen Actions.

And thus upon all these Reasons we see, That it is only our voluntary and chosen Actions, whereupon God's Laws lay restraint, and wherefore, at the last Day, he will inflict Punishment; so that no Sin is damning which is not chosen. This is a very clear and well-grounded Truth. For the *Nature of Law* which makes good and evil, of *Obligation* which enforceth it, of *Rewards* and *Punishments from God*, of *Acquiescence* and *Remorse from our own Conscience*, which ensue upon it; all these evidently evince and prove it. For not any one of them is concerned about any Actions, but those which proceed from Choice, nor have to do with any Works but what are wilful. So that every Action, whereto there is *Law* and *Obligation*, *Exhortation* and *Admonition*, *Reward* or *Punishment*, *Commendation* or *Reproof*, *Acquiescense* or *Remorse*, as there are for all those which the Laws of God will Sentence; every such Action, I say, is an effect of our own Will, or a *voluntary chosen* Action.

Thus it is clear from the *Reason* of the *thing it self*, that *all our Actions are not governed by God's Laws*, so as to be strictly either enjoyned or prohibited, punished or rewarded by them; but only *those among them, which are voluntary and chosen.*

And this will appear yet further,

2. From the *plain Declarations of the Scripture concerning it.*

(a) 1 Sam. 16. 7. That whereby God (a) looks upon his Laws to be either *broken* or *kept*, is the (b) *choice and consent of the heart. My Son, give me thy Heart*, saith Wisdom, *Prov.* 23. 26. So long as that is pure, we can have no damning Stain

(b) *Non est cui recte imputetur peccatum, nisi volenti*, Aug. de lib. Arbit. l. 3. c. 17. Εἰ μὴ ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἐλευθέρα πρὸς τὸ φεύγειν τὰ αἰσχρὰ καὶ αἱρεῖσθαι τὰ καλὰ δύναμιν ἔχειτο ἀνθρωπείου γένους, ἀναίτιον ἂν ἦν ὅτῳ ὁτιοῦν πραττομένων. Justin. Mart. Apol. 2. p. 80.

upon

upon us, *for out of the Heart*, as our Saviour assures us, all *those things must proceed*, which God will judge to *defile a Man*, Matth. 15 18, 19, 20. (*b*) The *Lusts of our Flesh*, must gain the *Consent of our Wills*, before they become *deadly Sins*, and *consummate Transgressions*. *Lust*, says St. *James*, *when* (having won over the Liking and Approbation of our Wills, and a half Consent to its impure embraces) *it has conceived, bringeth forth* the Embryo or rude Draught (answerable to Conception, which is but a half Production) of *Sin*: *And* this Embryo, of *sin*, *when* (by being brought on to a full Choice and Consent, or, what is more, to Action and Practice) *it is finished, bringeth forth* its genuine Off-spring *Death*, Jam. 1. 15. The consent of our Hearts then must compleat our Sin, and our own * Wills must of necessity concur to work our Ruin. For we must wilfully reject and cast off the Law which would keep us in, and go beyond it when we behold it, before our Transgression will have got up to the pitch of a damnable Pollution, or a mortal Crime. Nay, I add further, till we are come thus far, as wilfully to reject the Law, and knowingly to transgress it; we shall not be interpreted to commit that, which the Gospel calls † Sin, and which it strictly forbids and severely threatens under that Name. For if we will take S. *John*'s Word, this is his Explication of it. *Sin*, says he, is *the transgression*, as we render it, but more fully, and more agreeably to the Original it should be, the † *renouncing* or *casting off the Law*, 1 John 3. 4.

(*b*) Accordingly *wilful Sins*, S. *Paul* appropriately calls *Sins pertaining to the Conscience*. For of the *Mosaick Sacrifices*, which were appointed only for Sins of Ignorance that made an external Uncleanness, but not for wilful Sins; tho' they *Sanctifie*, saith he, *to the purifying of the Flesh*, yet *they can make none perfect, as pertaining to the Conscience*, *i. e.* as to wilful Sins. For wilful Sins, which burden the Conscience, had no Provision of any Sacrifices by his Law, *Heb.* 9. 9, 13.

* ὅπ ἀντεξέσον τὸ τοσούτῳ ἀγγέλων γενῶ καὶ τῷ ἀνθρώπων τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεὸς, δικαίως ὥσπερ ὧν ὧν πλημμελήσωσι, τὴν τιμωρίαν ἐν αἰωνίῳ πυρὶ κομίσονται. Just. Martyr, Apol. 1.

† ἁμαρτία, ἐκβασις καὶ ἀδικία· ἀδικία δὲ ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία ἐμὴν ἐκβασις. Clem. Alexand. Strom. 2. p. 284. edit. Lug.

† He calls it not παρανομία, which is the proper Word to denote a *going beside the Law*, or *a Transgression* of it; but ἀνομία, which imports a *being without Law*, or a *renouncing* of it. As ἀνόμοι καὶ ἀνυπότακτοι are the *lawless* and *disobedient*, 1 Tim. 1. 9.

And

And thus we see, that from *plain Scripture*, as well as from *clear Reason*, it manifestly appears, that all our Actions are not governed, nor will hereafter be judged by God's Laws; but such only among them, as are voluntary and chosen.

And therefore although there be no *Law* of Christ which gives Men *Leave to sin* without *Fear of Punishment*; yet some Actions there may be against *many*, or *most* of Christ's Laws, which shall not be judged to be *punishable Transgressions* of them; as are all our *involuntary* and *unchosen* Actions. And of this sort, are all those consistent Slips, which, as I shewed before, not only *are*, but needs *must* be born with, and allowed by the Covenant of the Gospel. For it is our involuntary Failings, which are our unavoidable ones, because we have no Power to avoid where we have no Liberty to will and chuse; and since they are such as we cannot help, they are such likewise as God pities, and such as the Gospel doth not punish, but graciously pardon and dispense with.

CHAP. III.

Of the Nature and Danger of voluntary Sins.

HAving thus clearly shewn in the *General*, that all the *Dispensation*, and *Allowance for our consistent Slips under the Gospel*, comes not from the *nakedness* and *want of Penalty in any of Christ's Laws*, but only from the *Imperfection* and *Involuntariness of our own Actions*; I will descend now to consider *particularly*, *what those consistent Slips and Transgressions are*.

In the Management whereof, I shall shew these *two* things:

First, That our *voluntary and chosen Sins and Transgressions of any of Christ's Laws, are not consistent with a State of Grace and Salvation, but are deadly and damnable.*

Secondly,

Secondly, That our *involuntary and chosen slips are consistent, and such as Christ's Gospel doth not eternally threaten, but graciously bear and dispense with.*

First, I say, *No voluntary sin, or chosen transgression of any of Christ's Laws, is consistent with a state of Grace and Salvation, but is deadly and damning.*

To make this out, it will be very requisite to shew,

1. *What sinful actions are voluntary and chosen:* And,

2. *That none of them is consistent with a state of Grace, but deadly and damning.*

1. *What Sins and Transgressions are voluntary and chosen.*

Then we commit a *wilful chosen sin*, when we *see and consider of the sinfulness of any action* which we are tempted to, *and after that chuse to act and perform it.* Every *chosen* sin, is a sin against *Knowledge*; for the Will is a blind faculty, and can chuse nothing till our Mind proposeth it. All choice, is an act of * *Reason* and *Understanding*, a † *preferring* one thing before another; and we must *view* and *consider both*, before we can *prefer either*.

* Τῶν ἑκουσίων ἑκεῖνο μόνον προαιρεῖσθαι λέγεται, ὃ προβουλευόμενοι ποιοῦμεν· ἡ γὰρ προαίρεσις μετὰ λόγου καὶ διανοίας. And on Rhod. Paraph. in Eth. Arist. lib. 3. cap. 4.

† Τὸ προαιρεῖσθαι δοκεῖ σημαίνειν τὸ πρὸ ἑτέρων αἱρετόν. Ibid.

That which suggests the sinfulness of any action to us, and sets the evil of it before us when we are about to chuse it, is our *Conscience*. For God has placed this Monitor of every Man's Duty in every Man's Breast, instructing it fully and plainly about good and ill, by the voice of Nature and of the Gospel, to tell him upon every occasion what he requires from him. And till such time as men have debauched their Understandings into a gross mistake of their Duty, so as to call *Evil Good*, and *Good Evil*; and God in his just anger has given them up to a state of hardness and a *reprobate Mind*, or a mind void of judgment; their own Consciences will keep them in mind of God's Laws, especially the great Laws of natural Obligation, which no man of Reason can pretend ignorance of, and generally of others too if they have not been culpably negligent to inform themselves about the same, and not suffer them to transgress without reproof. So that every *wilful sin*, is a *sin against a man's own mind or conscience*.

Nay

Nay further, so long as mens hearts are soft, and their consciences are tender, and before such time as they are wholly enslaved to their appetites, and quite hardened in sin; their consciences, especially in some great and *frightful instances*, will not only *suggest* and *represent* their Duty, but *argue* also and debate against their lusts for the practice and performance of it. And then men are not won at the first offer, nor consent to fulfil the sin upon the first assault of the temptation; but are drawn in after a long deliberation and debate, and dispute the matter with themselves before they submit to it. For when mens consciences do not nakedly suggest, but moreover plead the cause, and urge the observance of their Duty; there are arguments on both sides to render the choice at first somewhat doubtful. The Law of God promises an *infinite reward* to the action of obedience, and threatens an *endless punishment* if we disobey; both which are *future*, and to be expected in the next World. And the temptation inducing us to sin, presents us with a fair shew of *sensitive pleasure, profit* or *honour* if we practise, and threatens us with all the *contrary evils* if we neglect it: both which it sets before us as things *present*, to be felt and enjoy'd by us even now whilst we are here in this World. Now these are great motives on both sides, each of them bidding fair for our consent. Our *minds* or *consciences* suggest the *first*, and our *fleshly appetites* and *carnal reason* represent the *latter*; and for a good while these two Advocates sollicit the cause on both sides, and distract and divide our wills between them. So that when at last the temptation doth overcome, and the Law of Lust in the members prevails over the Law of God in the mind; yet is that after a strife and a war, after a tedious toyl and much contention. And these wilful sins, because we underwent a great *conflict* in our own minds about them, and past through a long *deliberation*, in an alternate succession of desires and aversations, hopes and fears, imperfect choices and refusals, 'ere the consent of our Wills was gain'd over to the commission of them, are call'd *deliberate* sins.

Every *wilful chosen* sin then, is a sin against *knowledge* and against *conscience*, when our own heart rebukes and checks us at the time of sinning, telling us that God hath

hath forbidden that which we are about to do, notwithstanding which we presume to do it. And if it happen to be in an instance that is *greatly criminal*, and *frightful* unto *Conscience*, which therefore puts us upon *demurs*, and creates *dispute* and *arguing*; then is it not only a *known*, but a *deliberate* sin also.

Nay, where we have *time*, and there is a sufficient space to consider in between the opportunity and the action; if we know that the action is sinful, and are not in ignorance about it, by having either never heard of it, or quite forgot it; we sin wilfully, whether our conscience checks us for it, and we consider of it or no. For whereſoever we *can consider*, we *can chuse*, there being motives on *both* sides sufficient to determine our choice on *either*. And as for all those Sins which we know, whensoever we have *time*, we can think and consider of them. For all thought is free, and if we have leisure, we may employ it according to our own liking. We cannot think 'tis true of many things at once, but we can consider of any one, and employ our minds upon it *when*, and *how long* we please. So that in all such leisurely transgressions, if we acted inconsiderately, our inconsideration was our own fault, and entred only because we suffered it, and had a mind to it.

In all such actions therefore as we know are sinful, every transgression with *time* and *leisure* is voluntary and chosen. For either we saw and considered it before we ventured on it, or we might have seen it if we would. Our thoughts indeed are our own, so that even at such times as we have leisure to consider, we may still if we please, transgress without all consideration. But if we do, that is not our mishap, but our fault, and we must answer for it. For where God has given us both *Power* and *Time*, wherein to see and consider; he most justly expects, and will certainly exact at our hands an account of what is done, as of a known and considerate action. So that not only our considerate and *deliberate* transgressions, but such others likewise as are *unconsidered*, shall be judged *wilful* sins, if they are acted *leisurely*, and are in such instances as we *know are sinful*.

These

These sins of *time* and *leisure* in known instances of *ill*, and of *deliberation*, are our *voluntary wilful sins*. And as for them, they are all of a heinous guilt, and a crying nature. Every commission of them, is a *despising of God's Law*. For when we sin wilfully, both our duty and our sin being set before us, and both being compared and thought of by us, whilst we see, or if we please may see and consider both, we *despise* and *reject* obedience to the Law, and willingly and advisedly prefer the obedience of our sin before it. Upon which account, our sinning wilfully, is called a *despising of the Law*, Heb. 10. 28. And for as much as such *despising of the Law* (which is nothing less than the will of Almighty God, which is most extreamly offended by it, and can most severely punish it) is an act of the greatest *boldness* and *presumption*: therefore as our wilful and chosen sins, stiled, in another word, *presumptuous sins*, Psal. 19. 13. And since such presuming with open eyes to despise God's Law, is a *profest rejecting* of his *Law* and *Authority*, an *open casting* off his *yoke*, and *rebelling* against his *Sovereignty*; doing *willingly* and *advisedly* what he *forbids*, and setting up our *own will* in opposition to *his*, which is the highest instance of *pride* and *insolence*, and *opposing God*: therefore are our wilful sins said to be acted, through *rebellious pride*, and with a * *high hand*, Numb. 15. 30, 31.

* ἐν χειρὶ ὑπερηφανίας.

But now as for these sins, which, being thus consider'd and deliberate, are voluntary and chosen; they are not all either *considered* or *deliberated of*, *willed* or *chosen* in the same way. For even among our wilful sins, we must observe this difference.

First, Some of them are *chosen expresly* and *directly*.

Secondly, others are chosen only *indirectly* and by *interpretation*.

1. *Some sins are chosen expresly and directly.* And such are all those sinful actions, whereto the consideration and thoughts of our minds are particularly directed, and which we eye and view before we chuse and act them.

They are such sins, which we see and attend to at the time of acting; or, which is more, whereat we pause and deliberate, doubt and demur, when we have a conflict and dispute in our own minds, whether we should commit, or keep off from them. And such direct choice

and

and express violation ordinarily happens, when men sin with some tenderness, and sense of conscience. They cannot act against their conscience without a check; or they cannot chuse the sin as soon as it is offered, but they undergo a succession of fears and desires first. For the *temptation* sollicits them to work the sin, and their *conscience*, being awakened by Gods Law, would deter them from it; so that they have a particular and express consideration of *both* sides, before they act *either*. As for this way of sinning therefore, by *express choice* and *direct violation*, it is incident ordinarily, not to all sinners whatsoever, (unless it be in such heinous instances of sin whereat the Consciences of the worst men are apt to startle) but only to those of a *middle rate*, whose Consciences, being not quite hardened as yet, make them transgress with *reluctance* and *remorse*.

But besides these, there are,

2. Other sinful actions which are not chosen *directly* and *expressly*, but only *indirectly* and by *interpretation*.

By an *indirect* and *interpretative* choice, I mean an express choice of such a *state of things*, as makes some sinful actions after that to be no longer a matter of free choice, but almost necessary and unavoidable. For some things are in our power at *first*, either to do, or omit them; but by some free actions of our own, we can, if we will, put that power out of our own hands, so as that afterwards we cannot keep off from them, if we would.

Thus a *servant*, for instance, who is *strong* and *healthy*, can if he please, perform his Master's will, and do what he requires of him. But if he chuse, by intemperance or other wickedness, to *maim his body*, or *impair his health*, he has parted with his own ability, and his omission of his bounded service after that, is no longer a matter of *choice*, but of *necessity*. A *wealthy man* can easily, if he will, give *every man his own*, and honestly discharge those debts, wherein he may stand ingaged to other men: But if he chuse to *waste his estate*, by Vice or Profuseness, or otherwise, to *throw away his riches*; he is no longer able to do what he should, but detains the goods of other men thenceforward, not, because he *will* not, but for that he *cannot* help it.

Now

Now these omissions of the *lame sick servant*, and this *dishonesty of the impoverished man*, in this necessitous state of things, whereinto they have thrown themselves, are no matter of *particular* and *express choice*, because, as the case stands, it is not in their power to refuse them. But yet they were chosen by them *indirectly* and in the *general*, when they chose to put themselves into this *necessitous state*, wherein, being once placed, they should not have the power thenceforward to avoid them. And tho' now they are *necessary in themselves*, yet that necessity being of their own chusing, they were, as the Schools speak, *voluntary in their cause*. And because that, which they sinfully do or omit now under this necessity of their own making, is *interpreted* to them, and charged upon them, by vertue of their former choice, as if now in every particular, they did expressly chuse it: therefore do I say it is chosen by *Interpretation*; (*i. e.*) it is *imputed to them*, and *may be exacted of them, as if they had chosen it expressly*.

And as for those sinful Actions or Omissions, which are chosen only *indirectly* and *implicitly* (viz.) *in the free choice of that cause, which made them afterwards to be all necessary*; they may very fairly be *imputed* to us, and *interpreted* to be our own. For in all reason, the natural and immediate effects of a man's own free and deliberate choice may be charged upon him, and if he chuses his necessity, it is fit that he should answer for it, and bear the punishment of those sins which he commits under it. What is a matter of any man's choice, may be an article of his accusation, and a matter of his punishment also.

As for such effects, indeed, as are so *remote*, that a man's understanding, in the honest and sincere use of it, cannot see them, although he do chuse the cause, yet neither *God* nor *Men* will look upon him to have chosen them. For there can be no choice where there is no knowledge, because a man must see a thing before he will and chuse it. But when effects lye *near*, and obvious to any ordinary capacity, if it do but use an honest diligence, as most mens necessity of sinning doth to those free actions which produce it; there it is only mens *sloth* and *negligence* if they do not discern it: And if they chuse blindfold, when they might see if they would open their eyes, it is all one in God's account as if they did see it. For it is against all reason in the world,

that

that the sinful neglects of men, should take away the rights of God. He has given them faculties, wherewith to see things before they chuse them, and he requires that they should use those faculties to see the same. And if they will not use them, that is their own fault; but what he requires of them he will still exact, and punish them for what is done, as for a chosen action.

So that as for those sins, which men have chosen in their *next* and *discernible Cause*, although they are not free to chuse or refuse them in the *Particulars* themselves, they are a part of their account at the last Judgment. What is chosen *indirectly* and by *interpretation*, is looked on as their own; and, if it be evil, will be imputed to them for their condemnation.

But now several of mens sins are of this last sort. For as we saw of some particular actions, that they are chosen in the *Particulars directly* and *expresly*: So are there likewise several others, which in the particulars cannot be refused, but were chosen in the *general*, in the free choice of that *Cause* which has made them all afterwards necessary, so that they are *voluntary* only *indirectly* and *chosen by interpretation*. For there is nothing so common in the World, as for men by their free choice of some sins, to bring themselves into a necessity of others: They freely will and chuse some, which necessarily cause and effect more.

Now as for those things, which may bring men into this necessity, sometimes one sin by Natural consequence draws on more; as expensive vices and profuseness may necessitate men to leave their Debts unpaid, and the Families unprovided for. But chiefly they are such things as make them *inconsiderate* and *hasty*. For therefore ordinarily it is, that in the Particulars we cannot expresly chuse or refuse several sins, because we cannot stay particularly and expresly to consider of them. We have brought our selves to such a pass, that they slip from us without reasoning and enquiring about them. For either our understanding is diverted, that it *cannot*; or so well acquainted with them, that it *need not* look upon them to observe and consider them. And since we do not particularly consider of them when they come, we cannot expresly will and chuse them: But forasmuch as we chose the cause of this inconsideration, we are said to chuse them indirectly, and by interpretation.

And as for the wilful and chosen Causes of such inconsideration, I shall discourse of them under these *two* sorts, *viz.* as causing such inconsideration in sins, either,

1. Of *commission*, or *doing what is forbidden.*
2. Of *omission*, or *neglecting to do what is commanded.*

1. For those causes of inconsideration in our sins of *commission*, which make us venture on them without all doubt or disquisition, they are chiefly these:

Firſt, *Drunkenneſs.*

Secondly, *Some indulged Paſſion.*

Thirdly, *Habit or Cuſtom of ſinning.*

For all these, when once we have consented to them, take away either *wholly*, or in *great* measure, all further freedom, and make us will and chuse what is evil indeliberately, and without consideration.

Firſt, As for *Drunkenneſs*; we find daily in those persons who are subject to it, that it so disorders and unsettles all the intellectual powers, that they have scarce any use of them at all. For their memory fails, and their judgment forsakes them. They have commonly no thoughts, for that present time, of good or evil, of expedient or inexpedient. Their *reason* is overwhelmed and laid quite asleep, and there is nothing ordinarily that is awake and active in them, but their *bodily lusts* and *sensual passions*, which then hurry them on to any thing that falls in their way without the least opposition. So that they are wholly governed by their *appetites*, and, for that time, *unbridled passions*, of *lust*, or *cruelty*, or *envy*, or *revenge*. They *blab* out that, which in their right wits they would *conceal*; and do what in a *sober mood* they would *condemn*. And so little is there of that reason and understanding in all their speeches and behaviour, which appears in them when the drunken fit is over, that any man may plainly see, how, for that present, it is removed from them. So that they act rashly and irrationally, more like *brute Beasts* than *Men*, committing *rapes*, or *robberies*, or *bloodshed*, or any other mad frolicks and sinful extravagancies, without any deliberation or consideration at all. And

Secondly, As for an *indulged passion*, we daily find, that when it is permitted to *grow high*, it has the same effect in making a man act inconsiderately, as *Wine* it self has. For a man may be *drunk* and *infatuated*, with a *violent anger*,

anger, an *impetuous lust*, an *over-powering fear*, as well as with *Wine*. It shall make him quite forget all Rules of Decency and Vertue, and attend no more to them at that time, than if he had never known them. Of *anger* it is affirmed to a *Proverb*, that it is a (f) *short fit of madness*. And the Case is the same in other passions, when they are suffered to go on to amazing and stupifying degrees. How many things are acted in the heat of *lust*, of *fear*, of *anger*, &c. which the men in their sober wits condemn so perfectly, that they would account themselves to be very much injured, if any man should say that they might be insnared into them, and fall under them? Of so great power are mens passions, in clouding, nay, for a time, quite overwhelming their reason and understanding. For such is the condition of the *reasonable soul*, that during its being here united to the *body*, it is subject to all its *alterations*, and liable, even in its most *proper* and *spiritual operations* of *reason* and *knowledge*, to be either *improved*, or *hindred*, or *quite taken away*, by those *changes* which befal it. In a *sound* and *undistemper'd body*, it is *free* and *active*; but if the bodily Spirits, which are those great instruments that it makes use of, are *ruffled* and *disordered*; if they are either *confused* and *overcharged* by *strong drink* or a *strong passion*, *blended* and *displaced* by a *phrensie*, *blasted* by an *apoplexy*, or otherwise *mixed* and *disordered*, *quenched* or *oppressed*, by any other violent Disease: All use of *reason* and *consideration* is strangely *hindred*, if not for a while perfectly *eclipsed*. And this all men are so sensible of, that every one is apt to plead this in his own behalf, for those faults which he commits in the height of Passion; and others are as ready to admit of it. For their great excuse is, That their Passion made them almost mad, and spurr'd them on to act they knew not what, without all sober thought and consideration.

(f) *Ira furor brevis est.*

Thirdly, As for the *habit* or *custom of chusing sinful actions*, it brings our wills to such an acquaintance with them, and to such an unstudied forwardness in embracing of them, that when an opportunity is offered for them, we cannot refrain from them if we would, or stand to deliberate whether we should chuse them or no. For *custom*, as we daily see in all sorts of actions, begets such a *promptness* and *easiness* in performing those things which

we are accustomed to, that we readily act them upon the next occasion, without staying to think and consider of them. *Use*, as was observed above, is a *second Nature*; and what we have been wont to do by long practice, we do as *easily*, as *quickly*, and as *indeliberately*, as we do those things which flow from the necessity of our very Nature it self. And as it is in all our other actions, so it is likewise in our works of sin and disobedience. By a long acquaintance with them and practice of them we learn at last to chuse them whensoever we meet with them, without all thought and examination. For all the little doubts and exceptions of our *minds* against them, all tormenting fears and checks of Conscience, have been so often silenced, that now they are heard no more to make any delay in our embracing of them. And our *wills* have been so accustomed to strike in with them, and to chuse the sinful action upon every return of the temptation, that now they do not need to pause, but act off-hand, and sin without enquiry. And our *bodily powers* are so naturally disposed to spring out into the commission of them upon occasion, that they hardly stay for a Command, but are as quick and hasty in the dispatch, as our Wills were in their indeliberate chusing of them. So that our willing of them after a long use, is not a matter of arguing and discourse, of weighing and considering; but a sudden, inconsiderate motion. It is rather turned into an act of *nature* than of *choice*, and has more in it of indeliberate necessity, than of considerate liberty. And as such, the Scripture is wont to represent it. For when sin is once grown into a *confirmed habit*, we are told, that it is not so truly an *inviting temptation*, as a *binding Law*, Rom. 7. 25. It doth not then so truly *perswade*, as *rule* and *command* us: For we are *led Captives* by it, ver. 23. and *sold under it*, ver. 14. We submit to it out of necessity, and not out of choice; because we do not chuse where we cannot refuse; and here, till the evil habit is altered, or begins to wear off, we must be under it, and cannot help it. For it is now become our very nature, and it is almost as much out of our power to alter it, as it is for a thing to cast off what is most natural to it. *Can the Æthiopian* Blackamoor *change his skin, or the Leopard his spots?* When they can do that, then, saith *Jeremy, may you also do good, who are accustomed to do evil*, Jer. 13. 23. If men

men are so pleased, they may chuse to sin themselves out of their liberty, 'till they can no longer chuse, whilst that evil state lasts, whether they shall sin any more or no. A *compleat habit*, and a *perfect custom*, whilst it reigns unbroken shall make them sin beyond all *liberty*, because they will sin without all deliberation; and then they are got up to that pitch whereof S. *Peter* speaks, *Of them who cannot cease from sin*, 2 Pet. 2. 14.

In sins of *commission* then, or *doing those things which are forbidden*, the causes of indeliberateness and inconsideration, are most usually these *three*, viz. *A drunken fit*, a *high passion*, or a *confirmed habit of Sinning*.

And then,

2. As for the other Branch of *sins*, *viz.* those of *omission*, or *neglecting to do what we are commanded*; Besides these *three* already mentioned, which have their evil influence upon sins of that kind also, there is *one great* and *particular* Cause which takes away our liberty of choice in them, and that is a *neglect of those means, which are necessary to the performance of the omitted Duty*. For as it is in all our other actions, so is it also in those of obedience; they hang in a *Chain of dependance*, and are *helped* on or *hindred* by several others, which, further than they influence them, are not *religious* themselves, nor make up any *part* of *obedience*. There is a Religion of the *means*, as well as of the *end*; and some actions are *helps* and *preparatives* to a *religious Duty*, but otherwise they are no *Duty* in *themselves*. Thus the not *staying to look upon a woman*, or to gaze upon her beauty, is one means whereto our Saviour directs a man, that he may be preserved from *coveting* and *lusting after her*, Matth. 5. 28. So *fasting* is a furtherance to *prayer* and *repentance*, and several other instances of obedience. And the case is the same in several other things. For *meekness*, and *patience*, and *contentedness*, and *forgiveness*, and every other Vertue has some *particular helps* and *furtherances*, some things that promote it and dispose us for it, and others that obstruct and hinder it.

Now as there is this order in the things themselves, so must there be likewise in our endeavours after them. We must take them as they lie, and use the *means* that we may attain the *Vertue*. For *meekness*, *humility*, *contentedness*, and the like, are not so perfectly under the pow-

er of our wills, as that they can be exerted through their *bare Decree* and peremptory Commandment. But if we would attain them, besides this imperiousness of Command, we must further use all those *means* and *helps*, which fit and prepare us for them. In *habits of the mind* men are sufficiently convinced of this. For it is not every one that wills *prudence*, who is a *wise*; or that wills *learning*, who is presently a *learned* man: But he who would be so, besides his *willing* and *desiring* it, must *read*, and *study*, and *observe*, and *seek instruction*: He must use all those means which lie in the way to knowledge, and those instruments which prepare for it, and are necessary to introduce it, before he can attain unto it. And the Case is the same in all *vertuous* and *moral habits*, which are seated in the *will* likewise. For we must use those instruments, which facilitate and dispose us for the Vertue, before the Vertue will become our own; and we must put in practice all the means and preservatives against any Vice, before we can in reason hope to conquer and avoid it. If we would not be *proud* or *peevish*, we must abstain from all the *inlets* to *pride* and *peevishness*. And if we would be *meek* and *humble*, we must not *neglect* the helps and instruments promoting *meekness* and *humility*. For the helps and the vertue must both go together; so that if we neglect the one, we shall certainly miss of the other also. When once we have neglected the means of any Vertue therefore, we have parted with our power of obtaining it, which we cannot hope to do but by those means. We have thrown away our liberty, in losing of our opportunity; so that now our missing of it, is not so much a matter of choice, as of necessity. And in sins of *omission*, this is the great and special Cause, which puts them without our power; for we neglect the means of doing what we should, and after that, it is not so truly our free choice, as our necessity that we omit it.

These then are the causes of our want of choice in the particular instances of sins, whether of *commission* or of *omission*. We do not chuse that *evil which we commit*, for want of *considerateness* and *deliberation*, the freedom whereof is taken away from us, by *drunkenness*, *passionateness*, and a *habit* or *custom* of committing it. And we do not chuse the *omission of some Duty which we neglect*, for

for want of *power*, whereof we have deprived our selves through the *neglect of those means*, which are necessary to the performance of it. So that both in *doing what is forbidden*, and in *neglecting what is commanded*, upon these Causes, we do what for that present we cannot help. For we do not chuse, because we cannot refuse it, and therefore it is not so much through choice, as through necessity, that we are involved in the Transgression.

But although these sins are thus undeliberated in *themselves*, and thus unchosen in their *own Particulars*; yet shall we be punish'd for them as surely, as if we had expressly chosen them, because they were all chosen in their *Causes*. For we freely and deliberately chose that, which made them necessary; and that is enough to make us answer for all those things, which we acted under that necessity.

For as for *drunkenness*, which is one of those Causes that deprives us of all liberty, by taking away all considerateness and deliberation; 'tis plain, that it either is, or may be deliberately considered of and chosen. For drunkenness is a sin, which requires time in the very acting of it. It is not entred on in a moment, or dispatched before a Man can have time to bethink himself; for he may pause and deliberate at every Glass, and is free all along to chuse or refuse the sin before the Wine inflames him. It has nothing in it of *suddenness* or *surprize*, and therefore nothing of indeliberation. Because where a Man has time, he may deliberate if he will; and if he will not, that is his own fault, and he must answer for it, and is punishable in all reason as if he did.

'Tis true indeed, to a Man who has never *tried*, and is *ignorant of the force of Wine*, or of any other intoxicating Liquor, and of its sudden way of discomposing his Spirits and dethroning his Reason; Drunkenness at the *first* time may be a sin of surprize, and an indeliberate action: Because he suspects not that a free Draught, which he takes down now, should a while-hence work so great an alteration: He is unacquainted yet with the strength of it, and knows not that it will have such effects upon him. And so long as he doth not see, that intoxication is at the end of his present draught, or a likely fruit of it, he cannot be said to deliberate of, or considerately to chuse it. It happens to him besides his expectation,

and is not an effect of choice, but of surprize. And thus it was with *righteous Noah*, at his *first planting* of a Vineyard, † Gen. 9. 20, 21. And this being *unforeseen* and indeliberate, what a man commits under it is the more excusable. But after a Man has felt by himself, or has learned from others, what the power of Wine, or any other intoxicating Drink is, it is generally afterwards his own fault, and his own choice if he be overcome by it. For either he doth, or may see the ill effects of it; and if for all that he chuse to go on in it, it is at his own peril: Because if he chuses drunkenness, he shall be interpreted to chuse all those sinful effects whereto he may see, if he will, that Drunkenness exposes Men. So that as for this Cause of indeliberate sins, *viz. Drunkenness*; it we see is in it self deliberated of, and freely chosen.

† *Vid. Theod. Quæst.* in *Gen. Quæst.* 56.

And as for the *second* cause of indeliberate sins, *viz. some indulged passions, which grow to such a height*, as to drive us on furiously into the fulfilling of them without suffering us to deliberate about them; they also are a Cause of our own free choice and deliberation. For it is in our power at *first*, either to give way to a beginning passion, or to repress it. We can check it as we please whilst it is low, because then its strength is very weak, and our own consideration and command is the greatest. But if we slacken the Reins, and give it liberty; then it knows no bounds, but proves too strong for us, and hurries us on whether we will or no. For in every step which the passion makes, it doth still the more disturb our Spirits, and thereby disable all the power of our reason and consideration. So that proportionably as it increases, our consideration, and, together with that, our choice and liberty is lessened and impaired. But at the first, whilst it is young and of small strength, it is in the power of our own Wills, either to indulge it, or to stop and repress it. And therefore if it get ground upon us, it is by our own liking, because either we expressly chuse to stay upon it, and thereby to feed and foment it, or wilfully neglect to use that power which we have over it, in curbing and restraining it. And when once we have of our own choice permitted it to go too far, then is it got without our reach, and goes on further without asking our leave, whether we will or no.

And

And herein lies the great error of Men, *viz. in that they freely and deliberately consent to the first beginnings of sin, and by their own voluntary yielding too far, they make all that follows to be plainly necessary.* For the *lustful* man deliberately and wilfully permits his wanton fancy to sport it self with impure thoughts, and lascivious imaginations, till by degrees his passion gathers strength, and his lust grows so high, that all his powers of Reason and Religion are scattered and clouded, and rendred wholly unable to subdue it. The *angry* Man freely and deliberately *hearkens* to *exasperating suggestions*, and *cherisheth discontents* so long, till at last his passion is got beyond his reach, and flies out into all the unconsidered instances of *rage* and *fury*. And the case is the same in *fear*, in *envy*, in *love*, and *hatred*, and other passions. Men first consent to the *first steps* and beginnings of a sinful lust, and when they have deliberately yielded to it a little way, they begin by *degrees* to be *forced* and *driven* by it. For all progress in a vicious lust, is like a motion downhill; Men may begin it where they please, but, if once they are entred they cannot stop where they please. All vice stands upon a (*g*) Precipice, and therefore although we may stay our selves at the first setting out, yet we cannot in the middle. But although, when once we have gone too far, it be not at our own choice whether or no we shall go further; yet was it in the free power of our own Wills not to have gone so far as we did. The entring so far into the passion, was an effect of our own will and free deliberation; and if this make that necessary which is done afterwards, that is a necessity of our own chusing. So that whatsoever our after-actions are, this cause of them is a matter of our own will, and freely chosen.

(g) *Omne in præcipiti vitium stat.* Juv. Sat. 1.

And then as for the *third* cause of indeliberate sins, (*viz.*) a *custom and habit of sinning*; that is plainly a matter of our own free chusing. For it is frequent acts that make a habit, and they are all free, and at our own disposal. Because the necessity arises from the habit, and doth not go before it; so that all those actions, which preceeded and were the causes of it, were free and undetermined. Wherefore as for that indeliberateness in sinning, which ariseth from an *habit* and *custom of sin*; it doth not in any wise *lessen* or *excuse* a sinful

action.

action. Nay, instead of that, it *aggravates* and *augments* it. For this is sin improved up to the height, and become not so much a matter of *choice*, as of *nature*. And to sin thus, is to sin as the *Devils* themselves do, from a natural Spring and Principle, without the help of thinking and disputing. Upon which accounts, as it is the most advanced state of sin, so must it be of suffering likewise; this state of *reigning*, and *prevailing habits of sin*, being, as St. *Paul* calls it, *a body of death*, Rom. 7. 23, 24. All which aggravation, both of sin, and suffering, it has, because it is an aggregate and collected body of many wilful and presumptuous sins. For before Men come so far, they have deliberately chosen, and wilfully neglected to refrain from all those precedent actions, which have advanced the strength of Sin to that pitch, and have made it to be, not so much a *temptation*, or a *refusable motive*, as a *binding* (h) *Law*, and *necessitating nature*. So that although those sinful actions, which flow from us after that we are come to a habit of sin, are indeliberate and unchosen; yet as for our evil habit it self, which is the cause of them, it was produced by a combination of wilful sins, and was in all the antecedent degrees a matter of choice and deliberation.

(h) Rom. 7. 23.

And lastly, as for the cause of our *involuntary omissions*, (viz.) *our neglect of those means, which are necessary to our performance of those things which are commanded*; this is clearly our own fault, and comes to pass only because we chuse it and have a mind to it. For the reason why we neglect the means is, because we will not use them. We have time enough wherein to deliberate and consider of them, and thereby to chuse and practise them; but we will not use it to that purpose. The means and helps to *chastity*, to *meekness*, to *contentedness*, and other vertues, are all before us, and we have power to put them in practice, if we think fitting. For it is just the same for that matter, with the endowments of our *wills*, as with those of our *minds* and *bodies*. We can see and consider of the means, of begetting *knowledge* and *learning in our minds*; and of those receits and rules, which are to promote the *health of our bodies*; and upon such consideration, we not only *can*, but ordinarily *do* make *choice* of them, and put them in *practice*. And although it happen much otherwise with those wise directions, and helpful rules

rules that are given for the *attainment* of *vertue*, which are read ordinarily only to be *known*, but not to be *practised*; yet is it in the choice of our own Wills to make use of *them* if we please, as well as of the *other*. The neglect of them is a wilful neglect, for therefore we do not use them, because we chuse to omit them. So that although when once we neglect the means, it be not at our choice after that to attain the vertue, yet that neglect it self was. The omissions in themselves, it may be, are not chosen, because they cannot be refused: But that negligence, which is the cause of their being so, is plainly an effect of our own choice and deliberation.

Thus then it plainly appears that our sinful *commissions* upon *drunkenness*, *passionateness*, and *custom* of sinning; and our sinful *omissions* upon our *neglect of the means* and *instruments of Vertue*, all which are *indeliberate* and *unchosen* in *themselves*, were yet deliberately chosen in their *causes*. So that all our necessity in them, is a necessity of our own making, seeing it was at our own choice whether ever we should have come under it; although, when once we are subject to it, it be no longer at our liberty whether or no we shall be acted by it.

And since all these sins, which are thus indeliberate in themselves, were yet so freely chosen and deliberated in their causes, they are all imputable to us, and fit to be charged upon us. They were chosen *indirectly* and *interpretatively*, in the choice of that *cause*, which made them all afterwards to be *almost*, if not *wholly necessary*. For either we did deliberate, or, which is all one, we had time enough to have deliberated as we ought, before we chose our own necessity. So that these sinful actions, which are *unchosen* and *unconsider'd* in *themselves*, are yet imputable to us, and fit to be charged upon us as our own, because we chose them by an *indirect* and *interpretative volition*.

As therefore there are some sins, which are expressly will'd in the particulars by an express choice and deliberation; so likewise are there several others, which are expressly and deliberately willed only in their cause, but in their own particulars are not chosen otherwise, than indirectly and by interpretation.

And *both* these together, take up the compass of our *wilful* and *chosen sins*. For either we expressly think, and deliberately

deliberately consider of the sinful action when we commit it; or we expressly, and very likely deliberately thought, or might have thought so if we pleased, upon that cause, when we chose it, which makes us now to sin without thinking and deliberation.

And by all this it appears now at length, how knowledge and consideration always, and deliberation oftentimes is implied in every wilful sin. For the sinful action is seen and considered, (or it is our fault if it be not, since we had both time and powers for such consideration) either in *it self*, or in its *cause*; and being as it is thus a matter of our consideration, it is likewise a matter of our choice, and a wilful action.

And thus having shewn what sinful actions are voluntary and chosen; I proceed now to shew,

2. That *none of them is consistent with a state of Grace, but deadly and damning.*

As for our *wilful sins*, they are all, as we have seen, of a most *heinous nature*; being indeed nothing less, than a *contempt of God's Authority*, a *sinning presumptuously*, and *with a high hand*. They are a plain disavowing of God's Will, and renouncing of his Sovereignty; they are acted in a way of defiance, and are not the unavoidable slips of an honest and well-meaning Servant, but the high affronts of a contumacious Subject, or of an open (*i*) Rebel. So that no *favourite* or *child of God* can ever be guilty of them, or he must cease to continue such, if he be. Because they interrupt all *favour* and *friendship*, and put God and him into a state of hostility and defiance; seeing they are nothing less, than a *renouncing of his Authority*, at least in that instance, and a *casting off his Law*. And this *lawlessness*, or rejecting of the Law, is that very word whereby S. *John* describes *sin*: For *sin*, says he, *is the transgression*, as we render it, but more fully it should be the (*k*) *renouncing of the Law*, 1 John 3. 4. In which sense of sin, for a *wilful* and *rebellious* one, he tells us, that *whosoever abides in God, sins not*, vers. 6. being indeed no longer a *child of God* if he do, but of the *Devil*, vers. 8.

They deprive us of all the *benefits of Christ's Sacrifice* so long as we continue in them, and of all the *blessings* purchased for us by his *Death*. This was their effect under the *Law of Moses*, and it is so much rather under the

(i) *Elatio contemnentis in minimis mandatis culpam facit non minimam, & convertit in crimen gravis rebellionis nævum satis levem simplicis transgressionis.* Bernard. de Præcept & Dispens. c. 14. p. op. 931.

(k) Ἀνομία not παρανομία.

the *Gospel of Christ*. For the sentence, which that Law pronounced upon all *presumptuous* and *wilful offenders*, was *death without mercy*. *The soul that doth ought presumptuously, the same*, by his contemptuous sin, *reproacheth the Lord, and that soul shall be cut off from among his people*, Numb. 15. 30. If ever it could be proved against him by that dispensation there was no hope for him. For he that *despised*, or contemptuously (*k*) transgressed *Moses's Law*, *died without mercy*, saith the Apostle, being convicted *upon* the testimony of *two or three witnesses*, Heb. 10. 28. For even those very sins, for which under the Law God had appointed an atonement, were no longer to be atoned for, than they were committed *involuntarily and through ignorance*. In the fourth Chapter of *Leviticus* we are (*l*) told, that as for those sins, which are committed *against any of those Commandments, which concerned things not to be done*; if they were acted (m) *involuntarily* and *unwittingly*, they should be allowed the benefit of an *expiation*, and the sacrifices for that purpose are there prescribed. But if they were acted *wilfully* and *advisedly*, then had they no right to the expiation there promised, nor would any sacrifices be accepted for them, but that punishment must unavoidably be undergone, which was threatned to them in the Law. For, to name no more, this we are plainly told of two instances; (*viz.*) the *contemptuous makeing of perfume*, and *eating of blood*, after both had been forbidden. Whosoever shall contemptuously *make any perfume like to that* (which was commanded to be made, *vers.* 35.) *to smell thereto*; *that soul shall* not be expiated by sacrifice, but *cut off from his People*, Exod. 30. 38. And *whatsoever man there be that eateth any manner of blood*, (viz.) knowingly and wilfully, the ignorant and involuntary transgressions of this and the like prohibitions being atoneable, (*Lev.* 4.) *I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people*, Levit. 17. 10.

(*k*) in the *Syriack* version, according to *Tremelius*'s translation, it is *transgressus est*, *scil. aspernanter*.

(*l*) Ver. 2.

(m) Ἄκων in version 70.

Thus severe was the sentence, and thus unavoidable was the penalty of all wilful sins, under the Law of *Moses*. And by how much the ministration of *Christ* is nobler, than the ministration of *Moses* was; by so much shall the punishment of all wilful and contemptuous sins against the Law of Christ, be more severe, than it

was

was for those against the Law of *Moses*. And this is the Apostle's own argument. *For if that word* of the Law threatning death, which was *spoken* unto *Moses* on Mount *Sinai* by the mediation only of *Angels*, *was stedfast*, *and every Transgression* of it *received the just recompence* of that death which it threatned, such Persons dying without mercy: *How shall we* Christians hope to *escape it*, *if we* wilfully *neglect* and contemn those Laws, which are published to us by *so great* a means of *Salvation* as the Gospel is; *which was* at *first spoken* to us, not by Angels, but *by the Lord* Jesus Christ *himself*, who is far above all Angels, being indeed the Son of God himself, *Heb.* 2. 2, 3. Surely, as the Apostle argues in another place, *if he who despised* even *Moses*'s *Law*, *dyed without mercy* for that contempt; we ought to think with ourselves, not of how much less, but *of how much sorer punishment he shall be judged worthy*, *who* by wilful sinning and despising of his Laws, doth in a manner *tread under foot*, not *Moses*, but *the Son of God himself*, Heb. 10. 28, 29. His punishment indeed shall be most dreadful, being nothing less than all those woes which are denounced in the Gospel. For *the Law*, with all its threats and penalties, *is* particularly *made* and designed, as St. *Paul* says, *for the lawless* (which is that very (*n*) word whereby St. *John* describes sin) *and* the wilfully *disobedient*, who when they see the Law, will not be (*o*) *subject* to it, 1 *Tim.* 1. 9.

(*n*) Ἄνομοι.
(*o*) Ἀνυπότακτοι.

As for our *voluntary* and *chosen* sins then, whether they are chosen *directly*, or only by *interpretation*, we see plainly that they are *not consistent* with a *state of Grace* and *Salvation*. For they subject us to all that death which the Law threatens, and deprive us of all that life and happiness which it proposes to us, which beside all the evidence which the Scripture gives us of it, is plainly demonstrable from the very reason of the thing it self. For certainly if Christ's Laws will condemn us for any actions whatsoever, it must be for those, which being voluntary, may justly be charged upon us, and looked upon to be our own. It must be our willing what sin enjoyns, which can make us Servants of it, and subject us to that death, which God has appointed for its wages: So that both from *Reason* and *Scripture* it evidently appears, that every *wilful sin* is certainly a *deadly one*, and puts the sinner out of a state of God's favour and salvation.

'Tis

'Tis true indeed, that every wilful sin doth not rob us of God's favour in such manner, as to *incapacitate us for regaining of it ever after.* But its effect is this, before such time as we have repented of it and amended it, we are under all the threatnings of the Law, and subject, if we die in that instant, to that death which is ordained for the wages of it. We are out of God's favour for the *present*, and the *state of friendship* betwixt him and us is interrupted; and 'till we *repent*, we shall not be *restored* again to it. As for the *state of acceptance* and *salvation*, it is *broken*, and *destroyed* for the present; for we are put under the punishing part of God's Government, and are made subject to his vengeance by being sinners against his Law. But as for the *foundation of that acceptance*, (viz.) that *habit of vertue and obedience*, which, in the wilful action, we sinned against; it is not *quite destroyed*, but only *wounded* and *impaired* in us. For *habits* are neither won nor lost by *one* action, but by *many*. It is frequency and repetition, that must either produce, or destroy them. If therefore a good Man is careless in some instance, and loses his innocence, and is vanquished into a wilful sin; yet is not the *habitual inclination* of his Soul towards that instance of Obedience, against which he offended, *quite extinguished* in him, but only somewhat *weakned* and *abated*. Thus, for instance, a *sober* Man, if he consent once to be *drunk*, doth not thereby wholly lose his *sober inclination*. But when the temptation is past, his habitual temper, which was foil'd and over-born, revives again, and he abhors his sin, and confirms his resolution, and so is ready at the next return of the temptation, to wash off the stain of his former offence, by an opposite instance of new Obedience. And the case is the same, in the wilful commissions of any other sin. For although any one wilful act be a damnable Transgression, and put the sinner into a damnable condition for the present; yet doth it not destroy, but only wound and weaken that habitual temper of vertue, which, if God spare him life, may enable him with ease to act oth erwise for the time to come.

Although indeed *some* wilful sins have such a *complication of evil* in them, and are carried on against so many *suggestions of the spirit*, and *checks of Conscience*, and are brought to effect through so *many thoughts*, and so *long*

contrivance,

contrivance, that they *destroy*, not only that *innocence* which is the *condition of our state of Grace*; but also that *habitual temper and inclination*, which is the *principle* and *foundation of it* too. They unravel all, and set us to begin again the work of Reformation a-new. Of which sort are wilful *Idolatry*, *Witchcraft*, *Perjury*, *Sacrilege*, *Murder*, *Adultery*, *Robbery*, *Oppression*, *entring into the fields of the fatherless and widow*, and such like. For these sins, do not only *destroy a man's acceptance with God for the present*; but moreover they *lay waste his Conscience*, and *spoil all his virtuous temper*, and inclination, whereby he should recover himself afterwards; whence they are call'd (*p*) *wounding*, and *wasting sins*. And this effect they have, because in the very acting of them there is usually so much *time* and *deliberation*, and a succession of so many *desires* and *aversations*, *hopes* and *fears*, *chusings* and *refusals*; that the sin has had a great many imperfect consents, before it comes to have that, which is last and prevailing. Our Wills, by a number of *imperfect wouldings*, are in a great part accustomed, and have almost wholly learned to *unwill* all that good, which they *willed* before; so that there is an *imperfect habit* contained in the *very action*. Besides what is most of all considerable, these being such sins as are made up of several *combined* together, before we can bring our selves to act them, our *conscience of their guiltiness* must be in great part *extinguished*, and the *good spirit of God* exceedingly *grieved*, if not wholly *quenched*. For *Adultery* implies *fornication*, and *injustice*; *Sacrilege* contains *theft*, and *impiety*; *Perjury* includes *lying*, and *prophaneness*; and so for all the rest. Now these being *complicated sins*, and crimes of an *accumulated wickedness*, men's *Consciences* are more than ordinarily *afraid* of them, and the *good spirit of God* is extraordinarily concerned to keep them from them. They suggest and represent the greatness of the sin, and the greatness of the danger. Which they do with such constancy and importunity, that before Men have silenced the one, and extreamly grieved, if not wholly quenched the other, they cannot overcome their own fears, and venture upon the commission of them. And here now is the danger, lest their own *Conscience* be laid asleep, and *God's holy spirit* leave them. For *he will not always strive with Men*, Gen. 6. 3. And *from him that hath not*, that is, hath

(p) *Peccata sauciantia*, and *vastantia*.

hath not used that talent of Grace which was granted to him, as the wicked Servant had not done who had hid it, *vers.* 25. *shall be taken even that*, says our Saviour, *which he hath*, Mat. 25. 29. And when Men resist the motions of the Holy Ghost to such a degree as this, and after all the repeated suggestions, and obedient inclinations which he threw into their Souls, during all that time wherein the sin was under deliberation, resolve still to venture on it: No wonder if being thus grieved and rejected, he withdraw himself for some time at least, if not for altogether.

And of all this we have a clear instance in holy *David*, upon that wasting sin of his, in *murdering Uriah*, and *adulterating his Wife*. For upon that he felt both these losses which I have mentioned, (*viz.*) the *laying waste of the vertuous temper of his own Spirits*, and *the deprivation of the good Spirit of God*. For this sin being so long in acting (as it must needs be, since it required such a train of wicked Plots and Contrivances to the consummation of it) he must needs feel all the opposition that could be made from the checks of his *own Conscience*, and from the restraints of the Spirit of God. And when he had born down both for the satisfaction of his lust, and trampled them under foot for the consummation of his sin; then doth he begin to feel the want, and to be all in fear of *losing the habitual rectitude of his own Spirit*, (which, by so many contrary actions implyed in that one great one, he had almost quite destroyed) and of *suffering the desertion of God's Spirit*, which by his continued provocations contained in it likewise, he had well nigh abandon'd. For to this purpose we find him complaining, and crying out in his *Psalm* of repentance for that great transgression, whereof, at the 14. *verse*, he makes expres mention, *Create*, or new make *in me a clean Heart, O God*, says he, *and renew a right spirit within me*. And besides that, *cast me not away* neither *from thy presence, nor take thy holy Spirit from me*, Psal. 51. 10, 11.

So that as for the effect of wilful sins, it is plainly this. All *wilful sins whatsoever, destroy our state of acceptance with God*, and *put us into a state of enmity and death for the present*. But as for *those* among them which *lay waste the Conscience*, they effect not *that* only, but moreover they *destroy that vertuous habit*, and *grieve*, nay, some-

times *drive away that good Spirit*, whereby we should restore our selves to it for the *time to come*.

And because this *latter* sort have this mischievous effect in making our return thus *dubious* and *difficult*, they are particularly taken notice of in the accounts of God. Thus, for instance, *David* had committed several *deadly sins*, for some whereof he had undergone severe punishment; as particularly for that proud presumptuous offence of his, in growing confident of an Arm of flesh, and *numbring of the people*, Sam. 24. 1, 10, 13, *&c.* But these made no notable decay, or devastation in the vertuous temper of his soul; for his own heart admonished of the evil which he had done, and for the most part he *repented quickly*, and rose again without delay, and so was presently restored to what he was before. But as for his sin in the matter of *Uriah*, it was a (*q*) *lasting work*, and took up a (*r*) *longer deliberation* and *contrivance*. It made his *Conscience hard* and *insensible*; for his own heart did not smite him into a change, nor enable him to *repent* without a (*s*) *monitor*. So that his stay in this crying sin was *long*, and his return both *difficult* and *dangerous*. And therefore in that character, which is given of him by the *Holy Ghost*, when all the rest are buried in silence, *this* sin particularly is expressly specified. *David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not from any thing that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite*, 1 Kings. 15. 5.

(*q*) 2 Sam. 11. 4, 5, 27.
(*r*) vers. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15.
(*s*) Chap. 12. vers. 1, 5.

Thus then, as for this *first* part of our enquiry, we see plainly of all our *wilful sins*, that they are *not consistent with a state of Grace and Salvation*, but that they *are all deadly and damning for the present, if we die under them without repenting of them*; and as for the *future*, that they *do all of them wound and weaken*, but *some almost quite destroy, that habitual, inherent Grace, whereby we should recover our selves to the state of pardon for the time to come*.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of the nature of involuntary sins, and of their consistence with a state of salvation.

THE *second* sort of sins, are such as are *involuntary* and *unchosen*; and *these are consistent with a state of salvation, and such as Christ's Gospel doth not eternally threaten, but graciously bears, and in great mercy dispenseth with.*

As for the *involuntariness* of men's actions, that which produces and effects it, is not any *force from without upon our will* it self. And the things in the *material* world, can never bind and compel the will of man, seeing it is no *physical, bodily thing*, like them, which any *bodily force* might act upon. Whatever they may force us to suffer, they can never force us to will and like a thing if we do not like it. And this is a privilege which the will of man has above all other things on the Earth, that nothing about it can * force or constrain it, but that still it wills and chuses as it self pleaseth.

* *Voluntas non potest cogi.* Axioma Schol.

As for the *actions* of men indeed, they are *mixt* things, because they flow from the *whole man*, both *Body* and *Soul*; and *beginning* in the mind or *will within*, are *consummate* in our *outward* and *bodily operation*. And as for the *last* of these, *viz.* our *bodily operation*, it may be *forced*, forasmuch as one body is liable to the force and compulsion of another. Thus, for instance, a *chast* Matron's Body may be *violently ravished*. A *peaceable* man's hand, may, by the overpowring strength of another man, be made the *forced instrument* of another's *murther*. The bodily work and operation can be forced, seeing other Bodies more powerful than it self can compel it. And in this sense the *Schools* understand the word *action, viz.* only for the *action of the Body*, when they make one *kind* of *involuntary* actions to be involuntary by *(b) violence* or *compulsion*; that being a thing whereto not the Will it self, but the Body only can be liable.

(b) *Invita per vim.*

But now these forced actions of the Body, although in *Nature* they be looked upon as actions, yet in *morality* they are esteemed as none at all. That is, *Laws*, which

are the Rules of *good* and *evil*, and the measure of Mens *Manners*, take no notice of them, nor look upon themselves to be either broken or kept by them; because it is not the Body and *Carkass*, but the *whole Man*, consisting of Soul as well as Body, which Laws are given as a guide to. So that a *ravished Matron*, if only her Body suffered, and there was no concurrence of her own consent to it, is as *chast* and *unpolluted* in God's account, and in the censure of the Law, as is the *purest Virgin*. And therefore it was a great truth whereby *Collatinus* and *Brutus* went about to comfort the poor *deflowred Lucretia* in (c) *Livy*; *It is the Mind*, say they, *which sins, and not the Body; so that in those actions, wherein there is nothing of will and deliberation, there is likewise no fault or transgression.* And this Case is expresly thus determined, *Deut.* 22. For in the Case of the *ravished Damsel*, whose will was no way consenting to it, but who did all that she could against it, it is expresly ordered, that *to her there is nothing to be done* by way of punishment, because *in her there is no sin worthy of death; for like as when one Man is slain by another, even so is this case*; she is not acting, but suffering in it, *ver.* 26.

(c) *Mentem peccare non corpus, & unde consilium abfuerit, culpam ab esse* Lev. Dec. 1. ver. fin.

As for him indeed, who chose thus to force us, 'tis true that the Law will interpret what is done by our Bodies as his action, because he freely chose so to compel us. Our bodily Members, which were forced by him, were his Instruments, and not our own; for he it was, and not we our selves, who ordered and directed them. We were the same in his hands, as a *Sword* is in the hand of a Man, *viz.* the Instrument only, but not the Agent. So that what was done by us is not our own, but his who was pleased so to make use of us. In him therefore the unlawful action, being willed and chosen, is really a sin and transgression. But in us, since it was not our own, it is looked upon as none. There is nothing charged upon our account for it, more than if it had never been done; because we did not act, but suffer; it had nothing of our own will, and therefore it can be no Article of our Condemnation.

So much of any action therefore as is forced, *viz.* the *outward, bodily operation*, in the estimate of *good* and *evil*, of *vice*, and *vertue*, is of no account to us, whatever it be to others; because it is not our own. For to make any

action

action *ours*, it must proceed not from our *Bodies*, but from our *selves*, who have *Souls* as well as *Bodies*: it must come from the Will within, as well as from the Body without: And as for our *will it self*, 'tis plain that it can never be made to chuse *involuntarily by force*, since it is not subject to any *forcible violence* and *compulsion*.

But although those actions which we exert our *selves*, and wherein we are not meerly passive instruments, in the hands of others, cannot be made involuntary by any force from *without* upon the Will it self: Yet may they become so, from something else *within* us. For our Wills are not the *only internal Principle* of humane actions, but *several others* concur with them, whereby their choice it self is influenced. Our *Wills* indeed *chuse* and *command our Actions*; but then our *passions move*, and our *understandings direct* and carry away our very Wills themselves. So that they are set in a middle Station, being subject to be acted upon and hurried away by some; as well as they are impowered to command and govern others.

1. Mens Wills are subject to be violently acted by their *Passions*, which hurry them on to consent to those things, which are both *without*, and *against* their *habitual liking* and *inclination*. When any passion is grown too strong for them, although they are afraid to act that sin which it hales them to, yet can they not withstand it. For the *Law of sin in the Members* is of more force with them, and prevails more over them, than the *Law of God in the Mind*. So that although they have several exceptions against it, they are not for all that able to refuse it; but they are overcome by it, and yield at last to act it, though unwillingly, and to fulfil it, though with trouble and regret.

Now here is an unwillingness, 'tis true, and things are done, which otherwise would not be done, because the power of Mens *Lusts* and *Passions* is so strong that their *Wills* cannot restrain them. For all the interest, which the contrary motives of *Reason* and *Religion* can make against them, is not able to contend with them. They *can* and *do* effect *something* indeed, so as that the Will, when it doth consent to them, doth it not *fully* and *freely*, with perfect ease and pleasure; but *unwillingly*, with fear and reluctance. But yet that which they do is not

enough, for the other side prevails, and the will is not able to hold out, but yields at last to fulfil the lust, and to act the sin still.

But now although this be *some sort* of involuntariness, yet it is not *that* which will excuse our transgressions, and make all those sins, which we commit under it, to be esteemed consistent slips and pardonable infirmities.

(d) Book 3. Ch. 4. For this state of *unwilling Sinners*, as we heard (*d*) above, is no state of *mercy*, but a state of *death*. It is the state which S. *Paul* describes in the *seventh Chapter* of his Epistle to the *Romans*, *viz.* a state of *captivity* and *slavery under sin*, ver. 14, 23. and thereupon a state of misery and *death*, ver. 24. And the *Grace* which Christ's Gospel allows to it, is a Grace of *deliverance*; a Grace that shall help us out of it, and rescue us from it. In this state of *weakness* and *infirmity* Christ found us. For *whilst we were yet without strength to help our selves*, saith S. *Paul*, *Christ died for us*, Rom. 5. 6. But now, since he has died for us, he will not leave us in it, but rescue and deliver us out of it. For *now he having dyed for us, we are likewise to reckon our selves to be dead indeed unto sin for him; that it should no longer* master and prevail over us to *reign in our mortal bodies* so far, as *that we should fulfill the lusts thereof*, Rom. 6. 11, 12. And as for our bodily *members*, which are the Stage whereon our *lusts* and *passions* reign, we are to *yield them up* now, *not* any longer *instruments of unrighteousness unto* the service of *sin*, *but instruments of righteousness unto the service of God*, v. 13.

If therefore we are truly *Christians*, and such as Christ came to make us, upon our becoming which he has procured Grace and Pardon for us, we are not *enslaved* and *led Captives* by our *passions*, but have *conquered* and *subdued* them. This S. *Paul* affirms expressly; For *they that are Christ's*, says he, *have crucified the flesh, with the* (e) *passions* or affections *and lusts*, Gal. 5. 24.

(e) παθήμασι.

But then besides our lusts and passions, which although they do make *some*, cannot yet effect a *pardonable* unwillingness; there still remains one cause more, which may produce it. For,

2. Men are subject to be carried on, to work what is both *without* and *against their habitual liking* and *inclination*, through *ignorance*. And this is the *great source*, and, for ought I know, *intire cause* of all our *consistent slips* and *pardonable infirmities*.

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As for the *will* of Man, it is a *blind* faculty, it can chuse nothing till the understanding shews it. That is, we cannot desire, or will a thing, before we see it. So that if at any time we offend through *ignorance*, or *inconsideration*, and do amiss, either because we did not *understand* our Duty, or because we did not *think* of it; unless our ignorance and inconsideration be *themselves* damnable, and charged upon us to our condemnation, nothing else will. For God will (*f*) impute nothing to us at the last Day, either to save, or to destroy us, but what proceeded from our own will and choice; and therefore if any sinful action be *innocently involuntary*, it is likewise *uncondemning*.

(*f*)—*Ergo non est cui recte imputetur peccatum nisi volanti.* Aug. delib. arbit. l. 3. c. 17. ὃ λογίζονται ὅσα μὴ κατὰ προαίρεσιν συνίασιν, ὁ γὰρ ὀφθυμίας, ἢ ἄλλη μεμοὶ χενκοφεσίν. Clem. Alexand. Strom. 2. p. 284.

And this now is the case of all our *slips* and *transgressions* of the Law of God, which are *consistent with a state of Grace and Salvation*. We act them without understanding or considering of them, and so they are involuntary and unchosen. For in some of them we do not *think* or *consider* of what we do at all; and in others, although we know the action, yet are we ignorant of the *sinfulness* of it; so that even in the choice of that, this still remains unchosen.

For, *Sin* and *Obedience*, is not *all* acting of a thing, but an acting of it with *certain ends and designs*. If we would be thought to obey God's Law, we must do it because he requires it; and if we be judged to have sinned against it, it will be for doing something, when we saw that he had forbidden it. For that service which God requires is not a heartless service, but a service of the will and choice. So that we must do what he enjoyns out of a will to serve him thereby, that is do it for his sake, and because we know his Law requires it, if we expect that he should take himself to be obeyed in it: And we must chuse to do what we (*g*) know is against his Law, for the sake of sin, before we need to fear, that he will punish us as Men that have sinned against him. Obedience then and Disobedience, besides the action, require likewise the eye and intention; *viz.* the chusing of what we do, because his Law commands it, or the chusing it when we know that his Law has forbidden it. But if this knowledge of his Law be wanting, although we chuse the evil action, yet do we not chuse the sin, because we do not see that it is sinful. For we would not chuse it, if we

(*g*) *Non facit aliquid contra Legem Legis ignarus.—Nullus potest ejus rei praevaricator esse quam nescit.* Salvian de Gub. Dei, l. 4. p. 134, 138 Ed. Oxon.

knew that he had forbid it; so that in our Hearts there is no contempt of him, or disobedience at all.

When therefore at any time we *knowingly* and *deliberately*, chuse an action, which we do not know to be sinful, except that ignorance be our own fault: whatever the action be as to *it self*, yet as to its *relation to the Law*, viz. its *sinfulness* and *disobedience*, it is not *willed* and *chosen*. For since we did not see its sinfulness, we could not chuse and consent to it. So that there is no rebellion in our *Wills*, whatsoever there may seem to be in our *Action*; but they may notwithstanding it be still intirely subject unto God, and ready to obey him in every thing, wherein they see he has laid his Commands upon them.

As some of our *consistent* slips and transgressions therefore, are not *thought* of, or *considered at all*; so others, although they are known and considered in *themselves*, are yet unknown under that *relation* of *sinful Actions*; so that the *Sin* is all the while unseen, and therefore involuntary and unchosen.

Now as for these slips and transgressions, which are thus unknown, and thereby involuntary; they are consistent with a state of Grace, and such as Christ's Gospel doth not eternally threaten, but in great mercy bear, and graciously dispense with.

To convince us of the truth whereof, besides all that has been † above discoursed upon this Argument, it is *first* considerable, that all these *involuntary failings* upon *ignorance* or *want of knowledge*, are *unavoidable*, and God, we know, will never damn any Man for doing that which could not be avoided. For no Man can chuse to shun that which he doth not see, but his Understanding must first discern and apprehend a thing, before his Will is in any Capacity to refuse it. And foralmuch as these slips are no matter of our sight and knowledge, they can be none of our refusal and avoidance.

† Chap. 1. 2.

Indeed, if a Man should *pause* and *deliberate*, *watch* and *examine* at *all times*; albeit he might still be subject to *one* sort of *involuntary* actions, *viz.* that which arises from his *ignorance of his Duty*; yet would he not be liable to the *other*, which results from this *inconsideration of it*. For where a Man has Time, and his Powers are awake, so that he is fit to look about him; his thoughts

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are his own, and he may fix them upon the consideration of what he pleases. And where he has the power to consider of any action, he has the power likewise to avoid it. And this is that which is pleaded in behalf of *Men's ability to keep all God's Commands intirely*, and to *live wholly without sin*, by *Atticus* in S. *Hierom*: (i) *Thus much we say, That a man may live without all sin if he will, for such time and place as his mind is intent, and his care is at stretch, and his bodily infirmities will suffer him to continue so.*

(i) *Hoc & nos dicimus, posse hominem non peccare si velit, pro tempore, pro loco, pro imbecilitate corporea, quandiu intentus est animus quamdiu chorda nullo vitio laxatur in cithara.* Hieron. Dial. adv. Pel. l. 3. p. 302. Ed. Erasm.

But as for this power of avoiding all involuntary sins which arise from inconsideration, it is no power at all. For herein we must know lies every Man's *unavoidable weakness* and *infirmity*, that whereas our Obedience is required at *all times*, this fitness is only in some *certain time* and *place*. For no Man is always in that good condition, to be *wise* and *well disposed*, *watchful* and *standing upon his Guard*. But he *forgets* when he should *remember*, and his faculties are *asleep* when they should be *awake*, and he is *diverted by other business*, and *hindred by intervening accidents*. So that sometimes, either he has not *leisure* to consider, or his faculties are not *well disposed*, and his thoughts free and at his own command, so as, when he has time, duly to consider in it.

And this evil state which thus unfits a Man for consideration, is not always in his own power, and at his own choice, whether he shall fall under it or no.

For as for the *want of time*, a Man in this World is placed in a *croud of business*, and whilst his thoughts are hot in the pursuit of one, another many times waits for him. And because opportunities do not stay till we are at leisure, we must take them when we find them; so that we act oftentimes without considering, since, if we should stay to think, we should stay beyond that time which we are to act in, if we do act at all. Besides, our *powers of action*, especially where there is any strong temptation of *pleasure* or *profit* to act for, are *forward of themselves*, and ready to spring out upon the first occasion. As soon as the temptation is offered

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to our thoughts, our wills indeliberately approve it, and all our bodily and active powers, by an unconsidered emanation, start up to pursue and endeavour after it; whence thinking and considering is necessary, not to raise, but to stop and restrain them. And then, if either our thoughts have been otherwise engaged, and so cannot readily withdraw themselves to consider of a new object; or if our thinking powers themselves are dull and heavy, and thereby unfit to consider of it; we presently and indeliberately go on to act the thing, without all pausing and due consideration.

For this other reason of inconsideration also, *viz.* the *want of power*, or *indisposition of our thinking faculty it self*, is not a thing wholly subject to our own will, to chuse *whether*, or *when* we shall fall under it. Because in this state of our Souls, during their being here united to our Bodies, they make use of our bodily powers in their use of reason, and in the very exercise of thought and consideration; and therefore even in *them*, they are liable to be changed and altered, just as our Bodies are. For in a *brisk* and *healthy* Body, our *thoughts* are *free*, and *quick*, and *easie*; but if our *Bodies* are *dull* and *indisposed*, our *Minds* are so too. A *heaviness in our Heads*, will make us *heavy in our Apprehensions*; and a discomposure in our Spirits, whether through the strength of *Wine*, or of a *violent Passion*, will make us discomposed and incoherent in our thoughts also. And if there be an utter *perverting*, or *blasting* of our *bodily powers*, as is often seen in the bodily Diseases, of *Epilepsies*, *Phrensies*, *Apoplexies*, and the like; there will be the same *perversion*, or *utter extinction* of our *conceptions* likewise. But now these indispositions of our Bodies, which thus unfit our very Souls for thought and due consideration, are not in our power to order, *when*, and *where* they shall seize upon us. For our Bodies are liable to be thus acted upon by any other Bodies of the World, whether we will or no. A *heavy Air*, or an *indisposing accident*, will work a change in our bodily temper without our leave; and when once that is indisposed, we cannot hinder our thoughts themselves from being indisposed too.

And since it is not in our power at all times to chuse, whether or no we will pause and consider; although we

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can avoid offending in those Cases wherein we can consider of it, yet is it manifest that we cannot avoid offence in all.

Indeed, if we take any *particular Actions*, and in our own thoughts *separate* it from any *particular time*, and from the *Chain* of *other particular Actions* amongst which it lies, we shall be apt to affirm, that it is such whereof we can think and consider. For take any action by it self, and being aware of it, we can let other things alone, and watch for it particularly; and when we do so, we are sure to find one time or other when our understandings are disposed for a due deliberation, and fit and able to consider of it. But then we must take notice, that this supposed state of an action, as *separate from the Croud of other actions*, and *determined to no time*, is only *imaginary* and in *speculation*. For when we come to practise them, though in some we have *time* and *power* enough, yet in others we find that we have not. Because either they come in the *throng of other Business*, and then our Thoughts, being hotly employed upon other Things, cannot so easily be drawn from them upon the sudden to consider of them; or, if they call upon us when we have time to consider in, yet it happens that our *Faculties are heavy* and *indisposed*, and so we exert them still without due consideration. When we think of any particular action *by it self* therefore, we take it out of the *throng of Business* wherein it is involved, and out of that *time wherein we are indisposed*; and then we are bold to conclude, that we can consider of it. But when *we come to practise it*, we find that our former speculation supposed false, and that it comes *mixt* with a *croud of other things*, or in a *time when we have troubled* and *discomposed Thoughts*: So that how subject soever it was to our consideration, in that *separate State* wherein we *imagined* it; yet have we no power to consider of it, in that *throng of Business*, or *indisposition of Faculties*, wherein we *find* it.

And this is verily the case of several of our slips and transgressions. For look upon any of the particulars by it self, and take it asunder from the rest; and then we shall be confident, that we may bethink our selves and consider of it. But take it, as indeed it lies among the mixt Croud of other actions, or as offered

fered to our indiſpoſed underſtandings; and then we ſhall find, that it ſlips from us without all conſideration.

And this, as I take it, is intended by a great man, when he tells us of ſins of *pardonable infirmity*, that *the* (k) *liberty which they ſeem to have when we conſider them in ſpecial and aſunder, they indeed have not when we conſider them in the general*; viz. *as involved in the croud of other actions amongſt whom they lie, and altogether.* Upon which account of their having in them no choice and conſideration, he queſtions whether they contain that, which can in ſtrictneſs and propriety of ſpeech be called *Sin.* And indeed if we underſtood the the ſame by *Sin*, which S. *John* doth, when he gives the explication of it, 1 *John* 3. 4. (*viz.* a (l) *rejecting* or *contemning of the Law*, (in which ſenſe only a ſtate of Grace is deſtroyed by it, and he who is born of God cannot commit it;) they have not. For Men cannot be ſaid to reject and (*m*) deſpiſe a Law, when they do not ſee and conſider of it.

(k) *Libertatem eam, quam in ſpecie habere videntur, in ſua generalitate conſiderata non habeant.* Grot. de Jure Belli, l. 2. c. 20. ſect. 19.

(l) ἀνομία

(m) *Nil contemptu agunt cœleſtium præceptorum, præcepta Domini neſcientes*, &c. — *Nemo ignota contemnit*, &c. *Salv.* de Gub. Dei, l. 4. p. 134. & 148. Ed. Oxon.

The *liberty* then, which we have about thoſe *ſlips* and *tranſgreſſions* which we do not *know* and *conſider* of, is in effect no liberty at all. For we neither chuſe the diſobedient *action it ſelf*, nor the *cauſe* of it. We do not chuſe the ſinful action it ſelf, becauſe we do not know or conſider of it; Nor do we chuſe the inconſideration, becauſe it is not left to our liberty, whether in ſome of our actions we ſhould be inconſiderate or no.

And ſince our ſlips and failings which are thus involuntary by ignorance, cannot be choſen or refuſed, 'tis plain that they cannot be avoided. And as for all thoſe things which we cannot avoid, it is clear from what has been ſaid above, that the Goſpel doth not eternally threaten us, nor will God ever condemn us for them.

But that theſe *ſlips* and *tranſgreſſions*, which being thus *unknown*, are likewiſe *unchoſen*, and ſo *unavoidable*, are not *eternally puniſhable by the Goſpel*, but *conſiſtent with a ſtate of Grace* and *Salvation*, will further appear if we conſider,

Firſt, The *Nature of God.*

Secondly,

Secondly, The *Nature and plain declarations of the Gospel.*

1. I say, their consistency with a *state of Grace*, or *God's favour*, will plainly appear, if we consider the *Nature of God.*

God is the most *gracious*, *loving* and *good natured Being* in the whole World. For all the love and kindness that appears among us Men, proceeds from him, and makes us to resemble him, and to be like unto him. Nay, he is not only *Loving*, but even *Love* it self. For *God*, says S. *John*, *is Love, and he who dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him*, 1 Joh. 4. 16. And if we will take that character which he gives of himself, it is chiefly made of the *various* instances of *Mercy* and *Goodness*. *The Lord*, says he to *Moses*, *the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin*, Exod. 34. 6, 7. All his delight is in exercising Love, and shewing kindness. For he swears to us as he *lives*, that *he has no delight* at all *in the death of a sinner, but had rather that* every *wicked man should turn from his wickedness, and live*, Ezech. 33. 11. He is by no means *forward to espy faults*, or *malicious to misconstrue actions*, or *prone to admit of provocation*, or *implacably angry when he is once provoked*, or *cruelly vindictive when once he is angred. The Lord*, saith the Psalmist, *is merciful, and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in Mercy. He will not always chide* when he has just reason for it, *nor keepeth he his anger for ever*, Psal. 103. 8, 9. He is not at all of the humour of *severe Masters*, who are prone to take offence; but, like a most *tender Father*, he is all benignity and goodness. For if any thing be pitiable, he pities it; if any thing is done amiss, he is slow to wrath, and easie to forgive it. *Like as a Father pitieth his own Children*, even *so the Lord pitieth them that fear him*, Psal. 103. 13. Nay, take this Love and Pity of a *Parent*, where it is at the highest pitch of all, *(viz.)* in *Mothers towards their most helpless*, and so *most pitiable Infants*; and yet this tenderness of God doth infinitely exceed it. *Can a woman forget a sucking Child, that she should not have compassion on the Son of her Womb? Yea, they may forget*, says God by his Prophet *Isaiah*, *but I will not forget* thee, Isa. 49. 15.

Thus

Thus *Loving*, *Pitiful*, and *Benign a Nature*, do the *Scriptures* represent *God* to be. And what they *declare* of him, all the World have *experienced*, and found by him. For every *impenitent Sinner*, is a lasting Monument of his *long-suffering* and *forbearance*; and every *prosperous event*, and deliverance in the World, is an effect of his *boundless love* and *kindness*. He is infinitely good, beyond all *desert*, nay, in spite of all *provocation*. For *he is loving* even *unto the unthankful and the evil, making his Sun to shine, and his Rain to fall*, and all the other mercies of Life to descend, *upon the unjust* as well as upon *the just*; upon them who contemn, as well as on them who obey him, as our Saviour observed, *Matth.* 5. 45. *Luk.* 6. 35. And this he is to such an astonishing degree, as to bestow upon them, not only the blessings of his *substance*, of his *protection*, and of his *kind providence*: But also, what is a wonder to conceive, for their sakes to part with his own *well-beloved*, and so much the more beloved, because his *only begotten Son*. *For God*, as saith the Apostle, *hath recommended his Love to us, in that whilst we were* sinners and *enemies*, *Christ* his Son came from him, and *died for us*, Rom. 5. 8.

Thus wondrously pitiful, obliging, and good-natured then is God, according to that account which both the *Scripture* and the *Experience* of the whole World give of him.

And now let any Man think with himself, how so *surpassing kind*, and *infinitely gracious* a nature as this, is like to be affected, with the *ignorant*, or *inconsiderate slips* and *errors* of his *Servants*? Will he be utterly offended with them, so as quite to cast them off, and for ever to condemn them? No certainly, but in great mercy he will pity and bear with them. For these slips, where we do not *consider*, or where we *err* and do *not understand* our Duty, are such instances of Disobedience, as imply nothing of *contempt*, or of a *rebellious Heart*; nor have any thing of our *will* in them. They are clearly involuntary, so that whatsoever the *action* may appear to be, the *will* it *self* is innocent. For the Disobedience cannot be chosen, since it is not understood; which indeed, in the notion and interpretation of God's Law, makes it not to be that Sin and Disobedience which is threatned, but something else: for that, as S. *John* tells us, is a

rejecting

rejecting or a *renouncing of the Law*; whereas in these slips, where we do not see it, 'tis plain that we cannot renounce it.

And since they have nothing in them of a disobedient Will, or of a rebellious Heart; can any Man think, that so gracious and pitiful a nature should be so highly provoked with them, as for ever to condemn his own *honest Servants*, and *otherwise obedient Children*, upon the account of them? Whosoever thou art, who art inclined to think thus, let me advise thee to consider a little what *Love* is, and whether it can possibly be guilty of such hard usage. If thou hast any competent degrees of that Love and Pity in thine own Heart, which are so infinite in God, bethink thy self whether *thou* couldst do it, for that is the way, and thence take thy measures in judging whether or no God can. Doth any *gracious Master* use that severity, towards the oversights and indiscretions of his *honest Servant*? Or, to rise yet higher, can any *tender Parent* shew that rigor, upon every error and inconsideration of his *heartily obedient Child*? Is not *every good Man* prone to pass by such offences, as are committed unwillingly against him: and the more he has of goodness, is he not still more forward to pardon and bear with them? There is no Nature upon Earth that is kind and pitiful, but will make allowances for those things, which proceed from want of understanding, and will pass over those miscarriages, which imply nothing of ill will or ill intention. Every good Man will overlook and connive at them, when they are committed by a perfect Stranger; but then most of all, when they are incurr'd by his own intimate and dear *Acquaintance* or *Relations*, by his own *Servant*, or his own *Child*. This, I say, every good and loving Man doth; and the more he has of Love and Goodness, the proner still he is to do it. For it is a natural and inseparable effect of Love or Charity, so that in what proportion it increases, in the same must this increase likewise. *Charity*, says S. *Paul*, *suffereth long, and is kind*; *Charity is not easily provoked*; *Charit thinketh no evil*; *Charity beareth all things, and endureth all things*, 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5. 7. The more therefore that any Man has of Charity, the more will he be sure to shew of sufferance, of pity, of endurance of such slips and oversights, as are consistent with an honest, and otherwise obedient heart.

And

And now, since those *imperfect* measures and degrees of Love, which are found in the hearts of all good Men, are of force more than sufficient, to make them pity, and bear with these slips of honest ignorance and inconsideration: that *infinite height* of Love, which dwells in God Almighty, must needs make him bear with them much rather. For the most loving Man upon Earth, hath not the thousandth part of his affection; the more loving any Men are indeed, the more still they are *like* him; but when they are arrived to the highest pitch of what *humanity* can bear, it is not possible, that they should in any measure *equal* him. And since God's Love is infinitely more, his pity and forbearance towards such pitiable oversights, which is a most natural and necessary effect of it, cannot possibly be less than ours is. No, if no kind-hearted loving man would, it must needs be the greatest injury to an infinitely loving God, to suspect that ever he should be severe in punishing us for them.

If we *ask God's Pardon* then, for all our *ignorant*, and *inconsiderate* slips and failings; he is as ready to *give*, as we are to *desire* it. And this we are assured of, because it is no more, than we daily experience at the hands of every *loving* and *good natured Man*. For since God cannot be *equalled*, and much less *out done* by the very best of us in kindness; what the weak Love of a man doth every day effect, that certainly the infinite Love of God will effect more abundantly. And as for this way of arguing, it is no more than our *Saviour* himself uses in another case, when he shews that *God will give good gifts unto his Children* at their request, because all *earthly Parents* do it unto theirs daily; when as yet their Love, which makes them grant the good things asked so readily, is infinitely exceeded by the Love of God, *Luk.* 11. 13.

Thus from the consideration of *God's Nature*, it plainly appears, that those slips and transgressions, which are committed *involuntarily* and *unavoidably*, because *ignorantly* and *inconsiderately*, do not put us out of a *state of Grace*, but *consist* with it.

Which will appear yet further, if we consider,

Secondly, The *Nature, and plain declarations of the Gospel.*

As for the *Nature of the Gospel*, S. *Paul* affirms plainly, that it is of such a *temper* and *genius*, as tends to ingenerate

generate in the Professors of it, not a *Spirit of Fear and Slavery*, which they are possessed with who serve a *rigorous* and *austere Lord*; but a *Spirit of chearfulness and free Confidence*, such as they enjoy, who serve a *gracious and a loving Father*. For he tells the *Jews* at *Rome*, that in *embracing of Christ's Gospel*, they *had not received* again *the Spirit of Bondage*, *unto* the possessing of their Hearts with *Fears* and Scruples; *but the Spirit of Adoption*, *whereby* they were emboldned, with the chearfulness and confidence of Sons, to *cry* unto God, *Abba*, *Father*, Rom. 8. 15. But now if the Condition of the Gospel it self were so severe, as that, according to the Tenour of it, these unavoidable Slips, of Inconsideration and Ignorance, should set God and us at Enmity; no Christian Man could ever look upon God, as upon his tender Father, with this Spirit of Filial Freedom; but must needs fear and dread him, as his angry and avenging Lord. And the Gospel requiring more of us under the Forfeiture of God's Favour, than any Man among us is able to perform; it could not minister to ingenerate in us a Spirit of chearful Confidence towards him, but quite contrary to that, to fill us with inextricable Doubts and Fears of him. As for these Slips of Ignorance then, which cannot be avoided, we may be assured, that according to the Gospel, they never can be punish'd; for the New Covenant must bear with them, because it cannot ingender in us this Spirit of Adoption, and Filial Confidence, without such Forbearance.

And then, as for the *Declarations of the Gospel*, in this Matter they are very clear also. For, besides those Places that are mentioned above, which shew clearly that *no involuntary Sins are damning*, and then certainly that our Slips of *Ignorance* are not, seeing they have the greatest Plea to involuntariness of any: I say, besides those, this Consistence of our unknown and unconsidered Slips, will be evident from other Places also.

And for this, to seek no further, St. *James*'s Rule is full and plain. *To him that knoweth*, or, which comes to the same thing, if he will may know *to do good*, and *doth it not*, *to him it is Sin*, Jam. 4. 17. If then we have no other Sins to answer for, but only these of Inconsideration and Ignorance, we are guilty of none, wherefore we shall be condemn'd, these unknown Sins not being of that number.

And indeed, St. *James*'s Rule is verified by *Scripture-Instances*. For holy *David* fell through *Inconsideration* and *Unadvisedness*, in *sundry* things; as Particularly in an inconsiderate *despairing of God's Mercy*, Psal. 31. 22. and in an *excessive sorrow for his Son Absalom*, 2 Sam. 18. 33. and ch. 19. 4. But notwithstanding these, and all other his unadvised Slips, he was all the while, a *Man after God's own Heart*, a person *upright* and *acceptably obedient still*.

Zacharias and *Elizabeth* were surprized, no question, as well as other People are, into several Slips and inconsiderate Follies. For *one* we have mentioned, even in that *short* Account which the Scriptures have given us of them, and that is this; *viz.* that at the first hearing of the joyful Message of the Angel, he is *incredulous*, and is punished with Dumbness for his *unbelief*, Luke 1. 18. 20. But yet this, and his other involuntary Failings of like nature, come not into the account of his Sins and Disobedience when God speaks of him; for notwithstanding these their Infirmities, of both of them we are told, that *they were righteous*, and that *before God, walking in all the Commandments of the Lord blameless*, Luke 1. 6.

As for *this sort* of Slips and Transgressions therefore, (*viz.*) our *Sins of Ignorance* and *Inconsideration*; we see plainly that they never will be *charged upon us to our condemnation*. They do not destroy a *Saint*, or put us out of a State of Grace and Salvation, but consist with it. This must needs be true, for *they must be pardoned, because they cannot be avoided*. Besides, *the Love and Pitifulness of God's Nature infers*, and the very *Temper and Genius of his Gospel supposes it*; *the Apostle plainly and fully declares it*; and *from God's own Mouth we are told of several of his dearest Saints who have experienced the Truth of it*. By all which it appears, that so long as we are guilty of no other Slips but such as these, we are safe in God's Favour, and secure of his Promises; we shall be accepted by him, although we live and die in them.

And thus at length it appears, what Sins are *truly* and *innocently involuntary*; (viz.) *those which are acted ignorantly and unwittingly*: And that they do not *unsaint* a Man, or destroy his State of Grace and Salvation, but consist with it.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of these involuntary and consistent Sins particularly; and of the first Cause of Innocent Involuntarines, (viz.) Ignorance.

BUT in regard this *Consistence* of our *ignorant* and *unconsidered* Slips, is a matter of so great account, in the *quieting* and *comforting* of *troubled* and *fearful Consciences*; I will yet proceed to enquire of it more *distinctly*; and to shew what *particular Ignorances* those are, which will cause that innocent Involuntariness, which Christ's Gospel doth not punish, as has been already shewn, but graciously dispense with.

To him that knows to do good, saith St. *James*, *and doth it not, to him 'tis Sin*, Jam. 4. 17. And the reason why it is so is this, because that Sin, which a Man knows and sees, he wills and chuses; but if he commit Sin, when he sees it not, it is not imputed to him for a Sin, because it is not chosen by him.

That we may clearly understand then, *what Ignorance renders any Sin involuntary*, and therefore *unpunishable*, it is very proper to enquire, what *Knowledge is necessary unto Choice*, and fit to make any Sin to be esteemed *voluntary* and *chosen*.

Now to our *Choice* of any Sin, there is a *two-fold Knowledge* necessary.

First, *An habitual* and *general Knowledge, that the Action is sinful.*

Secondly, *An actual Use and Exercise of that Knowledge, in a particular Animadvertence, and express thinking upon what we know*; which is *Consideration.*

Both these, are necessary to a *chosen Sin*; for we must both *know* an Action to be a Sin, and also actually *bethink* our selves, and *consider* of its sinfulness, before we can be said to *chuse* the Sin, and *wilfully* to disobey in it.

1. Before we can be said to *chuse* the sinfulness of any Action, it is necessary that we *know habitually* and in the *general*, that the Action whensoever it is committed, is *sinful.*

I call that an *habitual* and *general Knowledge*, when *we are not to learn of any sinful Action, that there is a Law that forbids it, nor are in any Doubts or Darkness in our own thoughts, whether it be a Sin or no.* But if it is proposed to our Minds, they are already resolved about it, and need not further to enquire of it; they know and judge it to be a Sin when they are asked the Question, and that is their standing Opinion and fixt Perswasion. And this *Knowledge*, because it is no more of *one* particular Action than of *another*, I call *General*; and because it is *fixt* and *permanent*, having grown into a lasting Impression and habitual Judgment of the Mind, I call an *habitual Knowledge*.

Now, that we may be said to chuse to sin and disobey in any particular Action, it is necessary that we have this general and habitual Knowledge of its sinfulness. For if we do not understand that, although we do chuse the *Action*, yet we cannot be esteemed to chuse the *Sin*, since our Will may be all the while innocent and obedient, and ready to refuse the Action, if it were made to see that it is sinful. We can have no choice of that, whereof we have no Apprehension; for the Will, as it is truly said, is a blind Faculty, and can chuse nothing till it be represented, and proposed to it by the Understanding. So that if our Minds are in Darkness about any Action, and have no Knowledge of its being forbidden; our Wills can have no share in chusing of the Sin, but since it was unknown, it must be also involuntary and unchosen.

But besides this *general*, and *habitual Knowledge*, of the sinfulness of any Action; there is moreover necessarily required to our Choice of it,

2. An *Actual Use* and *Exercise of that Knowledge*, in a *particular Animadvertence*, and *express thinking upon what we know*, which is *Consideration*. For there is no Knowledge, that directs and influences our Choice, further than we actually attend to it, and consider of it; but if at any time we did not think of it, it is all one as if we did not know it. Nothing is a Motive to our Will, further than it is heeded and attended to at the time of willing; and unless we see and consider of it *then*, when we are to chuse upon it. For in this Case, the *Civilians* Maxim is very true, * *That which doth not appear to be, is of no more account than if really it were not at all.*

* *Non apparentis, & non existentis, eadem est ratio.*

That

That any Sin then may be said to be willed and chosen by us, it is necessary that it occurr to our Thoughts, and be present to our Minds at the time of chusing of it. For if we transgress when we do not think of it, our Heart may be innocent all the while, and our Will incur no disobedience at all, since if we did but consider of the Sin, we would by no means embrace, but utterly refuse it. So that all that can be charged upon us in such Cases, is only the *Haste* and *Error* of our *Understandings*, but not any *Rebellion* in our *Wills*; for our Heart is good, altho' the outward Action appear to be evil.

Now since both a *general Knowledge*, and a *particular Consideration*, are necessary in every *wilful* and chosen *Sin*; the involuntariness of any Transgressions may arise from the want of *either* of them. So that those Sins are justly reputed to be involuntary and unchosen, which proceed,

1. From the *want of the general Knowledge*, as in all Sins of *Ignorance*.

2. From the *want of particular Animadvertence*, as in all Sins of *Inconsideration*.

1. The first Cause of an *innocent* and *pardonable Involuntariness*, is *Ignorance of our Duty*; when we venture to do what God forbids, because we do not know that he has forbidden it.

And this Ignorance may enter upon two accounts, either,

First, From our *Ignorance*, or *Mistake of the Law it self*, when we know not that God has made any such Law, as our present Action is a Transgression of: Or,

Secondly, From our *Ignorance*, or *Mistake of the thing it self, which the Law enjoyns or forbids*, when we know not that our present Action comes under that, which in the known Law is enjoyned, or forbidden.

Thus, for instance, a Man may sin by *Backbiting*, *Censoriousness*, &c. either because he knows not, that Backbiting and Censoriousness are *things prohibited*; or because he knows not that *what he doth* is Censuring and Backbiting. And either way the Error may be confined to his Understanding, and the Transgression be no where else but in his Mind, but may not reach his Heart or Will at all. For he would neither utter the *Backbiting* nor *Censorious* Word, if he knew that it were against

God's Will; but for this very Reason he ventures on them because he knows not that *Actions of that kind are forbidden*, or that *his is of that forbidden kind of Actions.*

First, The *first* sort of *Ignorance*, which can effect an *innocent involuntariness*, is *our Ignorance of the general Law which makes a Duty*, when we know not that God has given any such Commandment, as our present Action is a Transgression of.

All the Laws of Christ are not known by every Man, but some are ignorant of one or other of them. Nay there is no Man, how perfect soever his Knowledge of them be at present, but at some time he did not know them. He had a Time of Learning, before he attained to a compleat understanding of them. For our Knowledge of them, as of all things else, is *gradual*; it goes on by Steps, and from the Notice of one proceeds to the notice of another. So that even the *wise* and *learned* themselves, do not at all times see all those things which Christ has required of them, but pass through a long time of Ignorance, before they arrive at that Pitch of compleat Knowledge.

But then there are others, who have neither *Abilities* nor *Opportunities* to know every particular Law of Christ in a longer Time, nor some, it may be in their whole lives. For how many Men are there in the World, whose Understanding is slow, and who come to apprehend things with great Difficulty? And as their Faculties are narrow, so are their Opportunities very small. For although they are most heartily willing and desirous to see all that God has required of them, that they may keep and practise it; yet their *Education* has been so poor, that they cannot read it; the *Place* which God's Providence has allotted for them, is so destitute, that they are far from them who should instruct them in it; their *Condition* in the World is so subject and dependent, that they have little Time and Leisure of their own wherein to seek Instruction; and their *Apprehensions* are so slow, and their *Memories* so frail, that it is not much of it at a time, which they can retain, when they have got the freedom of it. They are *Servants*, or *poor Men*, and must be working for their Bodily Maintenance, when they should be in Search of Spiritual Doctrine.

Indeed,

Indeed, through the infinite Goodness and gracious Providence of God, it seldom happens, if at all, that they who have *honest Hearts*, which stand ready and prepared to obey his Laws, in *Christian Countries* live long without the means of Understanding them. For, although they themselves cannot read; yet, if they desire it, and seek after it, they cannot miss of *Christian People*, and of *Christian Guides*, who will be most ready and willing to instruct them. So that no Man amongst them, whose Heart is first desirous of it, can ever be supposed to want all Opportunities of coming to the Knowledge of his Duty.

But then we must consider, that *Knowledge of our Duty*, is a Word of a *great Latitude*, and has many *Parts* and *Degrees* in it. For our Duty takes up a great compass, no less than all the *particular Laws*, which are contained under the *general Precepts*, of *Piety*, *Sobriety*, *Justice*, *Charity*, *Peaceableness*. And although every Man's Opportunities will serve him to know *some*, and to understand the most *general* and *comprehensive*; yet will they not enable him to understand *all*. Our whole Duty, 'tis true, both towards *God* and *Men*, is comprehended in that *one* Law of *Love*, which as St. *Paul* says, is the *fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. 13. 10. So that if every Man had but the *Wit* and *Parts*, the *Time* and *Leisure* to make Deductions, and to run this general Law into as many particular Instances and Expressions as it would reach to, in the Knowledge of that one Law, which is soon learned, he might have it within his own Power when he would to understand all the rest, which are contained within the compass of those *two* great Branches, and general Heads of Duty. But alas! it is not every *common Head*, no nor very *many* even of the *Wise* and *Learned*, who are so *quick* and *ready*, so *full* and *comprehensive*, in making Inferences. But they have need to be shewed the Particulars, and are not able of themselves to collect them, by a tedious and comprehensive Train of Consequences. So that even when they have learned their Obligation, to the most *Material* and *General* Precepts of the Gospel; yet may there be several Particular ones still remaining, which not only the Poor and Ignorant, but they also, who think themselves to be more Wise and Learned, do not see, and take themselves to be obliged by.

As for the crying Sins, of *Perjury*, *Adultery*, *Murther*, *Theft*, *Oppression*, *Lying*, *Slander*, and the like, which even *natural Conscience*, without the Assistance and Instruction of *Christ's Gospel*, would be afraid of; these, 'tis true, no Man, who is grown up to Years of *common Reason* and *Discretion*, can be ignorant of, and yet be innocent. But then besides *these*, there are many other Sins, which are not of so *black a Die*, or of so *mischievous a Nature*, which many of them who profess the Gospel, through the *littleness of their Abilities*, their *Leisure*, or *Opportunities*, do not understand to be sinful. Their Consciences are not afraid of them, nor check them, either before, or after they have committed them. For how many are there of the Professors of Christ's Religion, who never think of being called to an account for *Lasciviousness* and *Uncleanness*, for *Passionateness* and *Uncourteousness*, for *Backbiting* and *Censoriousness*, for *Disturbing the publick Peace*, and *speaking evil of Dignities*, for *not speaking well of an Enemy*, or *not praying for him*, or for the like Breaches of several other particular Laws, of Christ's Gospel, whereby at the last Day we must all be judged? Alas! they know not of any such Laws, nor ever think of being tryed by them. In the Gospel 'tis very true, they are all *recorded*, and by Christ's *Ministers* at one time or other they are all *proclaimed*, and by *some exemplary good Men*, although God knows they are very few, in one Place or other they are duly *practised*; but yet for all this, a great many Christian Men are ignorant of some or other of them. For either they cannot read the Scriptures where they are mentioned, or they have not Opportunity to hear the Preacher when every one of them particularly is taught, or they are not in Sight and Observation of those Patterns of Piety by whom they are practised; so that still they do not understand them. Or, if at last they do come to know them, yet is it some time first, and they acted several times against them, before they saw that they were bound by them.

So that still we see there is room in the World for *Sins of Ignorance*, from Men's *not knowing of the Law* which they sin against. *Several* particular Laws, which lie more *remote*, and are not so *plainly* of *natural* Obligation, nor startled at by *natural* Conscience, are *oftentimes*, and by

by *many persons* transgressed, because they do not perceive themselves to be bound by them.

And as for this ignorance of one Branch or other of their Duty, it is some mens *unhappiness* rather than their *fault*; they do not so truly chuse it, as through an unchosen necessity fall under it. For it is necessary to *all* people, whether they will or no, for *some* time; and to *some*, for *all their lives*.

It is necessary, I say, to *all people*, whether they will or no, for *some time*. For by the very constitution of our Nature, which is before any thing of our own chusing, we are born ignorant: the mind of man being, as *Aristotle* compares it, like a *blank paper*, wherein is nothing written. No man ever since *Adam* came into the World in the free exercise of his understanding, and with his perfect wits about him. And when, after some time, we do *begin* to know, yet even then is all our knowledge *gradual*, and by little and little. For we first learn one thing, and then another, and so by several steps attain at last to a competent pitch of knowledge. When therefore any man doth begin to know God's Will, and to discern his Laws; yet is it not possible that he should understand them all at once: but some of them every man must needs be ignorant of, till he has had time to learn and know them all.

To *some* People, I say, it is necessary for their *whole lives*, to their dying Day they do not arrive to the understanding of some things, which God has required of them. And that because they wanted either *abilities* or *opportunities*, neither of which is of their own chusing. They are of a *slow understanding*, and have not those *means of instruction*, or that *time* and *leisure* to attend upon it, which others have. And that by reason of their *place* and *low condition* in the World, wherein it was God's pleasure, and not their own, to dispose of them.

But now this ignorance of some or other of Christ's Laws, being thus *involuntary*, it must likewise be *innocent*. For there is no damning sin and disobedience, but in our own choice; so that as long as the heart is true to God, he will not be at enmity for any thing else which may seem to be against him.

And

And since our *ignorance* it self is *innocent*, the *sinning* upon it will never be *rebellious* and *damning*. For the disobedience is not any way chosen, neither in it self nor in its Cause; we do not chuse the sin, because we do not see that the action is sinful, nor do we chuse not to see it, because we cannot help it. But where there is no choice, there will be no condemnation. So that the action which is done against the Law, shall not be punished by the Law, if we were thus innocently ignorant of the Law whereof it it was a transgression.

And that it will not, is plain. For God never did, nor ever will condemn any man, for the transgression of a particular Law, before he has had all due means and necessary opportunities, such as may be *sufficient* to any *honest* and *willing* heart, to understand it. The *Jewish* Law obliged none, but those whom it was proclaimed to, who had the advantages of being instructed out of it. It is *they* only, says St. *Paul*, *who have sinned in* or under *the Law*, *who shall be judged by the Law*, Rom. 2. 12.

Rom 5.13. The *Law* of *Christ* did not bind men, until they had *sufficient means* and *opportunities* of knowing it, and being convinced by it. *If ye were blind*, or wanted abilities, says our Saviour to the Pharisees, *you should have no sin*, Joh. 9. 41. And again, *If I had* not given them sufficient opportunities of knowing, *come, and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now* since I have, *they have no* * *cloak*, or no * pretence or excuse *for their sin*. Nay, *If I had not* given them all due means of conviction, and *done among them works which no other man had done, they had not had sin still*, John 15. 22, 24.

* προφασιν.

These slips of honest Ignorance of our Duty, are no more punished under the *Gospel* of *Christ*, than they were under the *Law* of *Moses*. For *Christ* our *High Priest*, doth atone for them by virtue of his *Sacrifice of himself*; as well as the *Aaronical Priest*, in behalf of the ignorantly offending *Jews*, made an atonement for them by his *sin-offering*, Levit. 4. 2, 3, &c. This St. *Paul* tells us, in his comparison of *Christ*'s Priesthood, with that of the *line of Aaron*. In his *interceding to God*, and *offering Sacrifice for sins*, *he can have compassion on the ignorant*, Heb. 5. 2.

Ignorance therefore of the *general Law* which makes any thing a Duty, so long as it is not *wilful* and *affected* by

by us, through the *merits* of *Christ's Sacrifice*, and the *Grace* of his *Gospel*, renders those offences, which we commit under it, pardonable transgressions; such as do not destroy a state of Grace, but consist with it.

And this is the very determination which St. *Cyprian* gives, in the Case of *transgressing our Lord's Institution*, in the participation of the *Lord's Supper*. For some *Churches* in those Days, were wont to make use of *Water* instead of *Wine*; in which way of communicating, several of them had been educated and brought up, having received it *ignorantly* and in the *simplicity* of their hearts, as they had done other things of their Religion, from the *practice* and *tradition* of their *Forefathers*. Now, as for the usage it self, St. *Cyprian* declares plainly, that it is a *breach of Duty*, and a *custom* very *dangerous* and *sinful*. * *It is*, says he, *against our Lord's Command, who plainly bid us do what he did*; (i. e.) *make use of Bread and Wine, which were those things that he used*. † *The Blood of Christ is not offered, if there be no Wine in the Cup to represent it; and how can we ever hope to drink Wine with him in his Father's Kingdom, if we drink it not at his Table here on Earth?* So that in the good Father's judgment, the *Duty* was *express*, the *Law binding*, and the *Transgression dangerous*. But yet, as for those innocent and well-meaning Souls who had no opportunity to be told of it, but were bred up in a contrary way, under the authority of a tradition that opposed it, and therefore in the simplicity of their hearts were ignorant of it: * *They*, says he, even whilst they do transgress,

* *Invenimus non à nobis observari quod mandatum est, nisi eadem quæ Dominus fecit, nos quoque faciamus, & calicem pari ratione miscentes à Divino Magisterio non recedamus.*

† *Apparet sanguinem Christi non offerri, si deest vinum calici, nec Sacrificium Domini cum legitima Sanctificatione celebrari, nisi Oblatio & Sacrificium nostrum responderet Passioni. Quomodo olim de Creatura vitis novum vinum cum Christo in Regno Patris bibemus, si in Sacrificio Dei Patris & Christi vinum non offerimus, ne calicem Domini Dominica traditione miscemus?*

* *Si quis de antecessoribus nostris, vel ignoranter, vel simpliciter non hoc observavit ac tenuit, quod nos Dominus facere exemplo & magisterio suo docuit: potest simplicitati ejus de indulgentia Domini venia concedi; nobis vero non poterit ignosci, qui nunc à Domino admoniti & instructi sumus, ut calicem Dominicum vino mixtum, secundum quod Dominus obtulit, offeramus——agentes gratias, quod dum instruit de futuro quid facere debeamus, de præterito ignoscit quod simpliciter erravimus.* Cypr. Ep. ad Cæcil. quæ est Ed. Rigal. 63.

gress,

greſs, ſhall go unpuniſhed. *Their ſimplicity and ignorance ſhall excuſe them, whilſt our knowledge will certainly condemn us; they ſhall be pardoned, becauſe they could not know it, but we ſhall be puniſhed, becauſe when we might have known and kept it, if we would, we neglected and deſpiſed it. In the mean time, herein is God's great mercy ſhown to us, and for this ſhould we return moſt hearty thanks to him that even now, when he plainly inſtructs us in that, which under pain of his diſpleaſure we are to do hereafter; he, at the ſame time, pardons us for all that, which through ſimplicity and honeſt ignorance, we have already done.*

And as this *innocent unwill'd ignorance of the Law it ſelf*, excuſes all thoſe tranſgreſſions, which we incurr by reaſon of it; ſo doth

2. The *ſecond* ſort of ignorance, (*viz.*) the *ignorance of the thing it ſelf which the Law enjoyns and forbids*, when we know not, that our preſent action is included in it, or meant by it.

God's Laws, as all others, run in *general terms*, and never go to reckon up all particular actions which are with them or againſt them, but leave the judging and diſcerning of that to our own ſelves. He tells us, that *theft* and *revenge* are ſinful; but leaves us to inform our ſelves, what *actions* are *thieviſh* and *revengeful*. He teaches us, that *Covetouſneſs* is forbidden; but he puts us to ſee of the action before us that it be *covetous*; and the ſame he doth in every other Law. For that which he expreſly mentions, is the *general name* of the action which he forbids; but as for the *particular application*, he leaves that to our own ſelves.

* τοῦτό ὅτι ἡ αἴτιον τοῖς ἀνθρώποις πάντων τῶν κακῶν, τὸ τὰς προλήψεις τὰς κοινὰς μὴ δύνασθαι ἐφαρμόζειν ταῖς ὑπὸμέρος. Arrian. Comment. in Epict. lib. 3 cap. 26.

Now here is a wide place, for the *ignorance*, and *errors* of all ſorts of men. For what *Arian* ſays of *happineſs* and *miſery*, is equally true of *ſin* and *duty*: * *in the application of the acknowledged notion, or law, to particular things, or actions, is the cauſe of all our evils; here the great ſcene of ignorance in morals, the field of doubting and diſpute lies.* The great controverſies which men have, either in their *own Thoughts*, or with *God's Miniſters*, is not ſo much whether *evil-ſpeaking*, *back-biting*, *cenſorious-neſs*, *unpeaceableneſs*, *drunkenneſs*, *ſenſuality*, or any ſuch prohibited vice, be a ſin. For as to that, the Law is expreſs, the very word is mentioned in it, and he that reads or hears the Law, if he attend to what he

reads

reads or hears, cannot but observe and understand it. But the great doubt is, whether *this* or *that* particular action, which they are about to commit, be indeed a *censorious*, an *unpeaceable*, a *sensual*, or a *drunken* action.

And the Reasons of this are several. For,

1. In some actions, although we know the *general Law*, yet we know not whether the *particular* action be comprehended under it; because *what is forbidden in the Law, differs from what is innocent, not in kind, but only in degree.* For a great part of our *appetites* and *actions*, are neither determined to good nor ill in their *whole nature*, but only as they are in *certain measures.* The use of *meats* and *drinks* within due bounds is *harmless*, but beyond that 'tis *intemperance*; the desire and search of *money* by innocent ways, in a moderate degree is *lawful*, but above that 'tis *covetousness*; the modest pursuit of *honour* and *promotion* is *innocent*, but when it exceeds, it is *ambition*; to have *just* thoughts of a mans self is *allowable*, but to be puffed up with over-high conceits is *pride*; and so it is in several other instances. A great many *passions* and *actions*, are not always sinful, but so far only as they are *deficient* or *exceed.* Which holding true of several vertues and vices, made *Aristotle* lay it down as a part of the nature of vertue in general, that it is something *consisting in* * *mediocrity*; and agreeably, that vice is something consisting in *defectiveness* or *excess.*

* ἔστιν ἡ ἀρετὴ ἕξις ἐν μεσότητι ὤσα, &c. Arist. Eth. ad Nicom. l. 2. c. 6.

Now the actions which are prohibited by several Laws, not coming under the compass of the Laws in their whole natures, but only when they are arrived to certain measures and degrees; herein, after we have known the general Law, lies the difficulty and unresolvedness, whether or no the present action falls under it. For it is a very *hard* thing, and, it may be, *impossible* to any humane understanding, to fix the exact bounds and utmost limits of vertue and vice, to draw a line precisely between them, and tell to a tittle how many degrees are innocent, and the just place where the excess begins. Here the *Wise* and *Learned* themselves are at a loss, and much more the *rude* and *ignorant*; so that in Laws of this nature, they may many times mistake their sin for their liberty and allowance, and go beyond the innocent degree, when they do not know it.

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2. In other actions, altho' we do not know the *general* Law, yet many times we are ignorant of the present actions being comprehended under it, because *the Law is not absolute and unlimited, but admits of several exceptions*, whereof we may mistake the present action to be one.

The *great* and *general* Laws of Christ, as of any other Legislator, have *several cases*, which are *not included* in the *general name* of the *duty* enjoined, or of the *sin* prohibited in the Law, but are *exempt* from it. What Duty is enjoined in more universal words, than that of *Peace?* But yet in several cases, we not only *may*, but out of Duty *must* nourish *contention:* For we are bid to *contend earnestly for the Faith, which was once delivered to the Saints*, Jude *verse* 3. We must be concerned for *God* and *Religion*, when others concern themselves against them. We are not *tamely* and *unaffectedly* to see *God's Laws* cancelled, or our *Countries Peace* disturbed; but must strive and contend, with as much *wise zeal* and *active courage*, and with infinitely more *honour* and *peace of mind*, to *maintain* and *defend*, than ill men do to *oppose* and *destroy* them. Again, what Law is delivered in fuller and plainer terms, than that of *forgiveing injuries?* But yet there are several cases, wherein we may justly *seek amends* for them. For we may bring a *malefactor* to condign punishment, or an *injurious* man to restitution; and the like is observable of other Laws.

Now those actions which come under the general name of the sin prohibited, not being forbidden universally, but some being excepted; here again is room for ignorance and mistake about the particular action, after we have know the general Duty. For we may take that to be a case excepted, which is indeed a case prohibited; and venture upon an action as an exempted liberty, which in truth and reality is a forbidden sin.

3. In other actions, altho' we know the *general Law*, yet many times we are in ignorance about the *particular action*, because there are *several actions which are not directly forbidden by any Law, but are always innocent and indifferent, unless when some Law takes hold of them indirectly.* The action is usually allowed, except when it

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is committed in ſuch a manner, as that the tranſgreſſion of ſome Law accompanies it. There is no Law againſt it ſelf, but only againſt ſome thing that is annexed to it. For God has not given a *particular Law* for every ſort of actions, but has left us in ſeveral to govern our ſelves by other *motives* and *inducements*, *viz.* of *pleaſure*, *honour* or *intereſt*, and not by virtue of a Commandment. But altho' theſe unreſtrained actions are no matter of a particular Law, which expreſly names them, and directly binds us up to one ſide, either in chuſing or refuſing the *whole kind* of them: yet in our uſe and exerciſe of them, they may at one time or other fall under the power of ſeveral. For, to illuſtrate this by an inſtance, There is no Law which directly and expreſly, either enjoyns or forbids us to *play at cards*, or other *paſtime*; but yet ſeveral Laws commanding or forbidding other things, may be tranſgreſſed in our uſe of them. For even in a game at *cards* we may incur the ſin of *Covetouſneſs*, by our immoderate deſire of money; the ſin of *Injuſtice*, by our endeavours to cheat and cozen; and the ſins of *Paſſionateneſs*, *Impatience* and *Unpeaceableneſs*, by our repining at our ill luck, our quarrelling and contending; and the like might be ſhewn in other caſes.

Now ſeeing ſeveral actions, which in themſelves are thus innocent, and under no Law; may yet at one time or other, by reaſon of ſome thing concomitant, and annexed to them, be indirectly a tranſgreſſion of a Law: here is ſtill a further reaſon, why, when we know the general Law, we yet are ignorant of our preſent actions being forbid by it. For the Law doth not look upon it directly, but takes a compaſs before it comprehends it. They lie not in the ſame line, and ſo one may be particularly ſeen and conſidered of, and much more known and underſtood in the general, without ſeeing of the other.

4. In other actions, although we know the General Law which we ſin againſt, yet we do not believe, that our preſent action is included in it, or forbid by it, becauſe *another Law happens to claſh with it in ſome inſtance, and ſeems to enjoyn and juſtifie what we do, although that be tranſgreſſed by it.* For it often happens in a Chriſtian Life, that two Laws interfere, and command differently in the ſame inſtance. Our Duty is at variance

variance with it self, so that when we pursue obedience in one particular, another is disobeyed by us. How obvious is it for him, who would avoid the *passion* and *impatience of discourse*, to fall into a fault of the opposite extream, by *sullenness* and *unsociable moroseness*? What is more common, than for men to be over-*censorious* and *troublesomely rigid in conversation*, who aim at nothing but to be *severely vertuous*, and *piously austere*? It is an obvious error for any, whilst they intend a *charitable feasting*, to run into some *small intemperance*; for *inoffensiveness* and *kind compliance*, to justle out the due *severities* of *reproof*; for *severity* to exceed into *ungentleness*; for *affection* to degenerate into *fondness*; and, which is the great instance of error upon this score, for our *zeal* for *God*, to disturb the *peace*, and transgress the bounds of *charity* towards men.

I do not mean such *zeal*, as transgresses *notorious* and weighty *Laws*, for *disputable*, nay, even for *clear* and *evident Doctrines* and *Opinions*. A zeal that will stick at nothing, but bursts through all God's Commands to propagate an Article, and ventures upon *murders*, *tumults*, *lying*, *slander*, *wars*, *blood-shed*, and other instances of a most notorious and damning disobedience in practice, to promote an Orthodox belief. For these are such instances of offence, as no *honest heart* can over-look; but if a man has not *debauched his Conscience*, they must needs appear to be of a *frightful guilt*, and of a *damning nature*. Any *vertuous temper* must abhor, and every *good conscience* utterly condemn them. So that no man of an honest and obedient heart, can ever hope to serve God by them, or think any pretence whatsoever of force enough to justifie the practice of them.

But then there are other sins which are of a *smaller guilt*, or of a *more alterable nature*, such as either are not *greatly*, or not *always evil*; but only when they happen to have *ill effects*, or are in an *exorbitant degree*; and these an *eager zeal* doth many times drive men to, and they think all is obedience, even when they proceed so far in them as to disobey. Mens *zeal* for those *Opinions which they account Religious*, transports them daily into *estrangedness of mind* and *fiercenes of behaviour*, into *passionate disputes*, and *disparaging reflections*, into *animosities* and *disquietness*, and a great *breach* of *mutual charity* and *love*.

And

And all these, though really they are Breaches of their Duty, are looked upon as *innocent*, nay, *praiseworthy*; they judge them to come from an honest Principle, and therefore doubt not but that they will end in an happy Reward. The Duty of pious Zeal is the Spring, although it contract much of human Passion in the Passage; and that they hope will be acceptable to God, which goes under cover of a Commandment, and comes to serve him.

And this was the Case, in that *hot* and *sinful Contest*, which happened betwixt those two great Lights of Vertue and Learning, *Epiphanius* and *Chrysostome*. For it was a *Zeal for publick Good*, and against such things as were likely, in their Opinion, to *corrupt the Faith*, or *disturb the Peace*, or *pervert the Practice* of the *Church*, which transported them into that warm Contention, that ended in an uncharitable Breach and passionate Imprecation; when * *Epiphanius* wrote to *Chrysostome*, *That he hoped he would lose his See, and never die a Bishop*; *and* Chrysostom *replyed to him, That he hoped he would come to an untimely End and never return safe into his own City.*

* ἐγὼ μὲν γὰρ ἐλπίζω σε μὴ ἀποθανεῖν ἐπίσκοπον· ὁ δὲ Ἰωάννης ἀπεκρίνατο, ἐλπίζω ἐγώ σε τῆς σῆς ἐπιβήσεσθαι πόλεως. Sozom. hist. eccl. lib. 8. c. 15. Another Instance of this we have in *Tertullian*, who through a Zeal for a severe vertue, which he thought was more strictly enjoyned among the *Montanists* than the *Catholicks*, was erroneously ensnared into the *Montanists Separation*, and into a sinful Neglect of the *Catholick Communion*. Concerning whose Opinions which led him into that criminal Breach, *Rigaltius* says thus, —— *Hæreses Tertulliani quæ dicuntur, eæ vix aliud præcipiebant, quam martyria fortiora, Jejunia ficciora, Castimoniam sanctiorem, nuptias scilicet unas aut nullas. In quibus quicquid peccavit, id omne virtutis amore vehementiore peccâsse videatur.* Rigalt. Observ. in lib. Tertull. ad Praxeam.

And a real Transgression of one Law, being thus, through the Clashing and Interfering of two Laws of Christ, in fair Appearance an Act of laudable and necessary Obedience to another: Here again is a further Reason, why, when we know the Law which we sin against, we yet think that our Action is not sinful, because we take it to be justified, nay, what is more, commanded by another.

5. In other Actions, although we know the *General Law* which is transgressed, yet we take our *present Acti-*

on not to be comprized under it, because of some *Prejudices which exempt it.* There is oft-times a clashing and interfering of Laws and Opinions, as well as of one Law with another. For Men entertain several Perswasions, which are inconsistent with some Instances of Duty, and that make them look upon themselves in those cases not to be obliged by them. Their Opinion justifies one thing, when the Law commands another; it contracts its force, and evacuates its Obligation; and makes them venture confidently upon several Actions, whereby the Law is transgressed, by making them first to believe, that in those Actions they are not obliged by it.

And because this is so universal a Cause of Ignorance and Error, and so powerful in making Men both overlook God's plain Laws, and, even whilst they consider of them, evacuate and undermine them; I think it very needful to be more full in its Explication, and shall therefore state it more largely in the *next* Chapter.

CHAP. VI.

Of Prejudice.

A Prejudice is a *false Principle, or such a former false Judgment, whereby we afterwards examine and judge amiss in others.* For all our rational Judgment of things is by Principle, when we determine of the Truth or Falshood of such, as are *suspicious* and *doubtful*, by their Agreeableness or Repugnance to such others, as we think are *true* and *certain.* So that those Opinions, which first take possession of our Minds, are the *Rules* and *Standards*, which all others, that seek to enter after, must be tryed by.

And if these Anticipations of Judgment are *true* and *solid*, or if they are taken up upon good Reason, and mature Examination; they are right *Maxims of Knowledge*, and *Principles of Understanding.* But if they are *false* and *faulty*, and entertain'd upon weak Grounds, through Haste and Rashness; they are *false Rules* and *Principles of Error.* And because they *hinder us in our after-Judgments*, making

making us judge amiss of things, as they needs must do who judge according to a false Measure, they are called *Prejudices.*

And these are a most *general* Cause of the Errors and Ignorances of Men. For we are ignorant many times of our Duty, and mistake a sinful Action for a lawful Liberty, when no want of plainness in God's Revelations, or in the Nature of Vertues and Vices, nor any want of Opportunity to be told of them; but some of these Hindrances of our own Minds, are the Causes of our Ignorance. Those very Duties, which are brought clear and open to our Understandings, are sometimes either *not at all*, or very *maimedly* and *imperfectly* understood, because our Minds are blocked up by a contrary Belief, which makes us not to attend to them, but either wholly to over-look them, or in great measure to evacuate and undermine them. For one Error begets another in *Practice*, as well as in *Speculation*; so that if we have an erroneous Belief, which contradicts our Duty, it is but rational that we should erroneously evacuate or impair our Duty likewise.

To understand this, we are to take notice, that any Truths or Duties, which are proposed to our Understandings, have a very different Success when they are offered to a *free* and *empty*, from what they have when they are proposed to a *prejudiced* and *prepossessed Mind.* For with the *former*, any Duty is sufficiently qualified to beget a right Understanding and Belief, if it be *proposed to them plainly and in clear Words*; but with the *latter* a plain Proposal of the Duty is not enough, but besides that, there is need withal of a *Confutation of the erroneous Prejudices which make against it.*

1. To a Mind that is *open* and *free*, not incensed by any repugnant Lust, nor misled by any contrary Opinion; *nothing more is needful to make it understand and believe its Duty, than to have a Revelation of it from God in plain Words, and a clear and evident Proposal.* For such Men are ready and willing, not only to hear and believe what God says, but also to take his Meaning from the obvious and simple Sense of *his own Words*, and not from any Agreement with their own *bye-inclinations* and *prepossessions.* They are not biassed by any Lust, or made a Party by any Opinions, which should make them lean to

one Sense, but are unconcerned on one Side or another: And therefore they have no Temptation to pervert God's Words and misinterpret them, and to make them speak, not what according to their usual and open Sense they should do, but what, to gratifie their private Lusts or Opinions, they wish they might do. So that he need do nothing more to give them a right Apprehension of his Will, than to utter it in such *plain*, and *intelligible Words*, as in their *usual* and *obvious* Sense are expressive of it.

A plain and clear Proposal then of any Duty, is sufficient to make these ingenuously honest, and free Minds to understand it; and nothing is a greater Argument, that the Expressions wherein our Duty is revealed are *ambiguous* or *obscure*, and that the Proposal is *incompetent*; than that these *teachable* Minds, which have nothing but the *inevidence of the Revelation* to misguide them, do not rightly conceive and apprehend it.

But,

2. To a Mind that is *prejudiced* and *prepossessed*, and through a Love to some former Opinions and Anticipations of Judgment which are inconsistent with it, *unwilling* to understand and assent to any Duty; a *plain and evident Proposal of the Duty is not enough: but besides that, there is need moreover of silencing those Doubts, and of confuting those Opinions which make against it.*

To such Minds, I say, a *plain Expression and evident Proposal of God's Will, is not sufficient to make them believe and rightly apprehend it.* For their Prejudice is a Bar against it, and makes them not to admit, but over-look the most natural open Sense even of plain and clear Expressions: Which they do, not because the Words do not obviously express it, but because their Prejudicate Opinion cannot consist with it. For their own Opinion they believe is true, and that in their own Sense, which, what it is, they know most certainly. And whilst they do think this a Truth, they cannot believe that to be a true Sense, although never so plain and obvious a Sense, of any other Words, which convinces it of Falshood. So that in this Case, of Clashing and Contradiction between a *prejudicate Opinion* and a *new Proposal*, so long as the Prejudice is adhered to, one of these *two* things must of necessity be chosen; either for the sake of such

such contradiction to *throw away the new Proposal*, or to *mitigate it by some Sense that is reconcilable to the prejudicate Belief*. And if the Proposer were any way of a *suspected Credit*, and a Person liable to Error and Mistake; such interfering Proposals would be rejected without more ado, and not admit of any long Debate. But if the Person who brings them, be of *unquestionable Credit*, both for the untaintedness of his *integrity* which cannot deceive us, and also for the Perfection of his *Knowledge* whereby he is not subjected to be deceived himself; (as God is in all those Truths which his Word declares, and in all those Duties which his Law enjoyns us) then is there no way left, if we stick still to our prejudicate Opinion, but to seek out for some amicable and consistent Interpretation of his Words, whereby they may be made to comport with it.

And here the *natural Defect of Words*, and the *universal Imperfection of all Speech* befriends us. For scarce any Sentence is so plain and full for one Sense, but that through the *witty Arts* of some, and the *irregular* and *improper Use* of others, it may be shewn capable to speak another. And that other Sense we shall be sure to put upon it, although it be never so remote, and foreign from that true and obvious Interpretation, wherein God meant it. Nay if we cannot readily fix upon it any other than the plain Sense, which clashes with our own Opinion; and yet dare not suspect its Truth in that Sense, be it what it will wherein God intended it: yet so long as we are true to our prejudicate Principle, we must suspect that it hath another, which although we cannot hit upon at present, yet *others*, or, at another time, it may be *we our selves* may. This, I say, we must do; because so long as we think our own Opinion true, we cannot judge another to be true too so far as it contradicts it. So that, if for his sake who proposes it, we must esteem it to be true likewise, that cannot otherwise be, than by softning it into such a Sense, as our own Opinion, whereby we judge of it, can consist with; or by interpreting the interfering Truths or Duties, not by the plain and obvious Sense of those Words which express them, but by the consistence of our own prejudicate Belief, whereby we measure the Sense and Meaning of those Words.

A plain Expreſſion then of any Law of God is not ſufficient to make us rightly apprehend, nor a clear Propoſal able of it ſelf to make us underſtand it againſt a Prejudice, which oppoſes the plain and true Senſe of it. Becauſe our Prejudice, ſo long as we adhere to it, will make us reject and over-look the *plain* and *true* Meaning of the Law which oppoſes it, and take up with any other *falſe* or *maimed* Senſe, although it be never ſo *remote*, *improper*, or *imperfect*, which agrees with it.

But that our Duty may be owned and underſtood in its true and full Meaning, 'tis neceſſary, not only that it be clearly propoſed, but alſo that our *own Doubts be ſilenced*, and our *prejudicate Principle confuted*, which impairs and undermines it. The true and full Meaning of the Duty will not enter into our Minds, till the gainſaying Prejudice is thrown out of them. For in all our Judgments of Things, this is the natural and neceſſary Courſe, which God himſelf has ſet us; *viz. to put a Senſe, or to paſs a Sentence upon any thing that is propoſed to us, according as we find it to claſh, or agree with ſuch received Opinions*, and Standard-Perſwaſions of our own Minds, *whereby we judge of it*. If they perſwade or inferr it, we approve the thing propoſed; but if they overthrow it, we disbelieve it. For it is againſt the Laws of all *Reaſoning*, and the Rules of *Argument* and *Diſcourſe* to *reject the plain and neceſſary Conſequence of an allow'd Principle*. So that till we renounce the Prejudice, which manifeſtly deſtroys a Law, we muſt needs evacuate, or, in great part, impair the Law, which is oppoſed thereby. But to make the Law to be underſtood in its plain Meaning, and believed in its full extent, 'tis neceſſary that the Principle be rejected which thwarts or excludes it; and makes us expound the ſame not in that plain and full Senſe which God's Words obviouſly expreſs, but in ſuch other as our Repugnant Prejudice will bear.

Our *Prejudices* then, or anticipated Opinions, which are looked upon as great Truths and Rules of Judgment, will in all likelihood make us ignorant of ſeveral Duties, or at leaſt of ſeveral Parts of Duty, which are plainly enough revealed. They will make us to over-look, either ſome *whole* Laws, or a *great part* of the *compaſs* and *extent* of them, and to think ſeveral Acti-

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ons to be exempt from them, which are really bound up by them. Which, I say, we shall do, because we shall not judge of our Duty from those *plain words* of Scripture that express it to us, which is certainly the safest course whereby to have a full Sense of it; but from our own *fore-conceived Notions* and *Opinions*, which oftentimes, and in several Instances and Degrees, if not altogether, *evacuate* and *impair* the plain Meaning of those Words.

To help our Apprehensions in this *abstract* Discourse, we will look a little into the *Practice of Men*; and that will shew us plainly how bad an Influence Prejudices have upon their Minds, in making them ignorant either of several *Duties*, or of the sinfulness of *several Actions* which are restrained by them. For we shall find great numbers of Men of all sorts, to have taken up several false Opinions, which are inconsistent with some Vertues, and which make those Laws that they are against to have no *force* at all, or very little, upon their *Conscience*, nor any *effect* upon their *Practice*. So that they misinterpret that to be no Duty, which God has made one, and transgress *boldly* and *securely*, without *Fear* or *Remorse*.

For some, out of a certain *timorousness* of mind, have entertained a wrong Belief, That *nothing is lawful in God's Worship, but what either some authentick Example recorded in Scripture has approved, or some Command has made necessary.* So that when any *Law of their Governours* comes to enjoyn any *Circumstance* or *Ceremony* in God's Service, which *God* and the *Scriptures* had left *indifferent*; although when once such Law has past, the plain and known Precepts of *Obedience* to *Laws*, and *Submission* to *Governours*, of *Peace*, and *Unity* among *Fellow-Christians* enjoyn it, they account the fulfilling of it to be no longer a matter of *Obedience* and *Duty*, but *unlawful* and a *Sin*. For their mistaken Notions of *things being made lawful only by some Example or Law that warrants them*, and not, on the contrary, being *Lawful* and at *Liberty antecedent to all Laws and Precedents, because no Law forbids them*, is the Rule whereby they measure the Obligation of all these Duties, and it plainly overthrows them. So that in a confident Belief thereof, they securely transgress these Laws and break the *Unity* and disturb the *Peace* of Men, thinking that they *obey God* in so doing.

Others have given way to a false Opinion, that *Religion is so much every Man's Care, as that he may, not only serve it as he can in his own Station, but meddle also, and mix himself in the publick Maintenance and Protection thereof.* They are not content in securing it to keep within their *own Sphere*, and to do what they are bound in Duty towards it as *private Christians:* That is, *to pray to God earnestly and importunately, that he would preserve it*; and to *endeavour industriously in their own place after its Preservation and Increase*, by *their own lively and exemplary Practice of it*, by *a careful Instruction of other Men in the Reasons of it*, by *exhorting them to a close adherence to it*, and by *pressing upon them all the Motives of Heaven and another World, to perswade them to a conscientious taking up the Cross, when it shall please God to lay it in their way, and a patient and couragious Suffering for it.* When God by his Providence brings a *National Religion* into Danger, these are the Duties whereto he calls every *private Man*, and it is his *present Honour*, and shall be his *immortal Happiness*, conscientiously to *discharge* the same. And would they content themselves with this, making it their Care exemplarily to practise it, and leaving Kings and Rulers, whose Office, and Title it is to be Defenders of the Faith, to protect it, all were well and laudable. But when once they have imbibed this Opinion, that they are to meddle not only as *private Promoters*, but also as *publick Contrivers* and *Protectors of the Faith*; they run beyond all these *private Means*, into a *Censuring* of the *Administration of Affairs*, and the *Prudence of Governours*, into endless *Fears* and *Jealousies*, *Murmuring* and *Complaints*, and other Instances of *Pragmaticalness*, *Irreverence*, and *Contempt of higher Powers*, and *Disturbance* of the *publick Peace.* All these their Principle justifies, and therefore in Assurance of it they boldly venture on them. So that although the Commands of *studying to be quiet*, and to *do their own Business*, against a *pragmatical meddling* in the *Affairs*, and *disturbing* the *quiet* of other Men, are expressed in Words most plain and easily intelligible; yet do they over-look them, and in all those Instances wherein their Prejudice leads them to transgress, quite evacuate all their plain Force and obvious Obligation.

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Some for a long time neglect the dutiful use of one *Sacrament*, viz. *Baptism*, because they think that they have a pious reason against it; and many other *humble* and *well-meaning minds* omit a dutiful *participation of the other*, viz. *the Lord's Supper*, as scarce ever thinking themselves to be sufficiently prepared for it. Their false opinion carries them into their sinful neglect, and makes them disobey those Laws which require the use of them, by making them first to think that they would offend God if they should observe them.

These breaches of Duty, and indulged acts of sin, *well-meaning* and *honestly obedient minds* are sometimes drawn into, through erroneous conceits and prejudicate Opinions. For some men of *honest hearts*, and of *humble modest tempers*, who are really ready to comply in every thing wherein their Consciences allow them; are yet insnared into them, and disobey, only because they judge obedience to be unlawful. And that which makes them judge so, is not any lust or sin, which is harboured and unmortified in their hearts, which should be ministred to by such erroneous judgment. But the Opinion took possession of their Souls by the *education of their Parents*, or by the *authority* and *instruction of their spiritual guides*; they imbibed it at first in the simplicity of their Souls, and since that have continually been used to it, and bred up in it. So that although they never serve that sin whereto it ministers in other instances, but always fear and conscientiously avoid it; yet where this prejudicate Opinion warrants the same, they do.

These Prejudices, I say, are not altogether inconsistent with an honest and obedient heart, but are *sometimes* excusably entertained by *well meaning* and *religious men*, altho' *many others do damnably disobey* in them. But then there are many others, which are of a more *heinous nature:* which altho' some well-meaning men may *pardonably* admit at *first*, before they have seen the *damnable consequences* and *effects* of them, which at the same time they disclaim, yet very few can adhere to when *they* are set before them, or justifie or act these consequences in pursuit of their Prejudices, without being in danger, if repentance intervene not, to be *damn'd* for them. Of which sort, among several others, I take these to be that follow,

Some

Some are poſſeſſed with an odd belief, that *Chriſt is a Temporal and Secular King in Sion,* (i. e.) the Church on Earth, and *that his Subjects are to fight for his Intereſts, and for the protection of his Religion, with the ſame worldly force and armed violence, that the ſubjects of other ſecular Princes uſe.* And as for *Earthly Kings,* ſince they are but Deputies and Delegates of Chriſt the Supream King of all, that *they are no further to be ſubmitted to, than they act ſerviceably and ſubordinately under him*; but that *they may,* yea, *ought to be perſecuted as Enemies and Apoſtates from King Jeſus, if in any thing they oppoſe and act againſt him.*

Now when men have once imbibed this Principle, they run on furiouſly, as every man muſt who underſtands it, into all the miſchiefs of Rebellion and Bloodſhed. For in all Inſtances where this prejudice leads them to it, they utterly over-look, as things not belonging to them, all the plain Laws of *Honour* and *Reverence, Submiſſion* and *Obedience* to *Governours*; of *Juſtice* and *Charitableneſs, Mercy* and *Peaceableneſs* towards their *Fellow Subjects:* and burſt out violently into *contempt of Governours,* and *reproachful uſage,* and *ſpeaking evil of Dignities,* into *revenge* and *fierceneſs, ſtrife* and *bitterneſs, ſedition* and *tumults, ſpoils* and *robberies, murders* and *bloodſhed*; and into all other *licentious* and *extravagant* effects, of a moſt *unjuſt war,* and *horrible rebellion.* In all which they think, that they only fight God's Battles, and ſpoil and ſlay his enemies, and, like good Subjects and Soldiers of the Lord of Hoſts, with all their might maintain his Rights, and ſerve his Intereſt. For all this rebellion againſt earthly Kings, they eſteem to be nothing elſe, but a proof of their Loyalty and juſt Allegiance to King Jeſus the Soveraign Lord of all, who by theſe worldly means muſt Rule on Earth, altho' he dwells in Heaven.

Others to exalt the Temporal Monarchy and Grandeur of *Chriſt's pretended Vicar* here on Earth, have imbibed this Principle, that a *good end will juſtifie any action, and that all is lawful which is neceſſary and profitable for the advancement of the Churches Intereſt.* And having once ſucked in this venomous Opinion, in all thoſe actions wherein it is any ways concerned, there is no Precept ſo plain which they cannot over-look, nor

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any obligation so sacred which they do not cancel. They stick not at the breach of all the most *exalted*, and *sublime Laws of Christ*. For instead of being *meek* and *gentle*, they are *fierce* and *furious*: instead of being *slow to wrath*, they are *enemies without provocation*; instead of *forgiving injuries*, they are violent to *revenge* them; instead of *doing good to enemies*, they are *eager to destroy* them; instead of *taking up the Cross*, and *bearing* it with *patience themselves*, they are utterly *impatient* till by any means they can *force* it upon *others*. Nay, they burst through the most *notorious*, and *weighty Laws* of *Humanity* and *Nature*, in *dissimulation* and *equivocations*, in *lyes* and *perjuries*, in *sowing strife*, and all manner of *unpeaceableness*, in *spoils* and *robberies*, *murders* and *assassinations*, *treasons* and *rebellions*, which even *natural* conscience, where it has any force at all, must needs tremble and be amazed at. But yet all this time they think, that they are doing God's Work, whilst indeed they are subverting his whole Religion; for their poisonous Principle bears them out through all, and they are confident that what they do will be accepted for his service, because it is intended for the advancement of his *Church*.

Some again of the more extravagant *Anabaptists* entertain'd a wild Opinion, That *all Dominion is founded in Grace*, and that *nothing but vertue and holiness can give any man a title to his possessions*. And when once they had believed this, they acted but agreeably to their own Principle, in over-looking all the plain Laws of *Justice* and *Honesty* in all those instances where this Doctrine would warrant the contrary, and in exercising all sorts of *fraud*, *cozenage*, *spoils* and *robberies*, where they had *power* and *opportunity* to commit them. For *their spoiling of their Neighbours*, they esteemed to be like *Israels spoiling of the Egyptians*, (*viz.*) a taking away that which belonged not to them, seeing God had given it away from them.

It were endless to recount all the *enormously wicked* and *disobedient Opinions*, which ill men take up in favour of their beloved sins. For some over-look the plain Duties of *temperance*, *mortification* and *self-denial*, because thy are *sensual* and *fleshly*: and others give no heed to the manifest duty of *paying tythes*, because they

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are *loth to part* with their *money*. When Christ preached up a *charitable* use of the *unrighteous Mammon*, the *Pharisees, who were covetous*, would not believe and understand, but *derided him*, Luke 16. 14. And the same way it fares with other duties, when mens unmortified lusts, which are struck at by them, are opposed against them.

By these Instances, and many more which might be mention'd, it clearly appears, how destructive many mens Consciences, or prejudicate Opinions are, of several parts of Religion, and the Divine Laws. They do in great measure cancel the force of Duty, and make men transgress in several instances against known Laws, by making them first to believe, that in those cases, they do not oblige them.

But now to determine which of these prejudices is *pardonable* and *consistent with a justified state*, and which *destroys* and *interrupts* it, we must observe in them this difference.

First, That *some* of them *get into mens minds* or *consciences, not through the influence of an evil and disobedient heart, but through weakness of understanding, or fallibility of the means of Knowledge*; and these are *consistent with a state of Grace and Salvation.*

2. That *others get into mens consciences, through some damnable lusts and vices*, and *they are deadly and damning.*

First, Some prejudices, which lead men into sin and disobedience, *get into their consciences, not through the influence of an evil and disobedient heart, but through weakness of understanding, and fallibility of the means of knowledge*; and these do not *destroy, but consist with a State of Grace and Salvation.*

They get not into mens understandings, by means of an *evil* and *disobedient heart*. For it is not any love which they have for the damning sins, of *pride, ambition, sensuality, covetousness, unpeaceableness, faction*, or the like, which makes them willing to believe those Opinions true that are in favour of them. When they take up their prejudice, they do not see so far as these ill effects, nor discern how any of these sins is serv'd by it: and therefore they cannot be thought to admit it with this design to serve them in it. Nay further, what is the best

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sign of all, that lust or disobedience, which the prejudice happens to minister to in some instance, is *mortified* and *subdued* in them; and so cannot have any such influence upon them. For sometimes those very men, who, in such instances as their prejudice avows it, are *irreverent* and *disrespectful*, *pragmatical* and *disobedient to their Governours*, or the like; in all other cases, wherein their Opinion is unconcerned, are most *respectful*, *quiet*, and *obedient*. *Humility* and *modesty*, *peaceableness* and *quietness*, *submission* and *obedience*, are both their temper and their practice. For they love and approve, and, in the ordinary course and constant tenour of their lives, conscientiously observe them; and nothing under such prejudicate Opinion, as makes them believe them to be unlawful in some cases, could over-rule that love and obedience which they have for them, and prevail upon them so far as to act against them. So that with these men, it is not the disobedient temper of their hearts which makes their conscience err; but the error and prejudice of their conscience, which makes their practice disobedient.

In such men therefore as are thus qualified, who do not see those sins which their prejudice ministers to when they admit it, and in all the other actions of their lives, (except where they are over-ruled by this prejudice) shew plainly that they have mortified and overcome it: 'tis clear, that the prejudice did not get into their consciences through the influence of an evil and disobedient heart.

But that which made way for it, was chiefly their *natural weakness of understanding*, or the *fallibility of the means of knowledge*. They are not of an understanding sufficient to examine things exactly, when they embrace their prejudice; for their *Reason* then is *dim* and *short-sighted*, *weak* and *unexperienced*, unable throughly to *search into the natures of things*, and to *judge of the various weight, and just force of reasons*, to *sift* and *ransack*, *separate* and *distinguish* between *solidity* and *show*, *truth* and *falshood*. But those Arguments whereupon they believe, and upon the credit whereof they take up Opinions, are *education* and *converse*, the *instruction of spiritual guides*, the *short reasonings* of their *neighbours* and *acquaintance*, or the *authority* of such *books*

or *persons*, as they are ordered to *read*, and directed to submit to. *These* are the motives to their belief, and the arguments whereupon they are induced to think one Opinion right, and another wrong, and the best means which they have of discerning between truth and falsehood.

But now all these means are in no wise *certain*; they are an argument of belief indeed, and the best that such men have; but yet they are far from being *infallibly conclusive*. Sometimes they lead men right, but at other times they lead them wrong; for they are not at all determined one way, but in *several men*, and at *several times*, according as it happens, they minister both to truth and falshood.

In matters that are *primarily of belief* and *speculation in Religion*, they lead an *hundred* men to error, where they lead one to Truth. For there are an *hundred* Religions in the World, whereof one alone is true; and every one has this to plead in its own behalf, that it is the Religion of the Place and Party where it is believed. The Professors of it are drawn to assent to it upon these Arguments, (*viz.*) because they have been *Bred* up to it by the care of their *Parents* and *Teachers*, and *confirmed* in it by long *Use* and *Converse*: It was *Education* and *Custom*, the authority of their *Spiritual Guides*, and the *common Persuasion* of their *Country*, which made them both at first to believe, and still to adhere to it. And every one in these points having these Arguments to plead for his own belief, against the belief of every other man who differs from him: since of all these different Beliefs one alone is true, these Arguments must be allow'd indeed to minister to Truth in that, but in all the rest to serve the Interest of Falsehood.

In matters of *Duty* and *Practice*, 'tis true there is infinitely more accord and good agreement. For most of the *laws of nature*, which make up by far the greatest part of every *Christians* Duty, are the *Catholick* Religion of all *sober Sects* and *Parties* in the World. So that these Arguments of *Custom* and *Education*, are tolerably good, and right Guides to mens *Consciences* in most cases how ill soever they are to their speculative *Opinions*; because although they carry them into a *wrong belief*, yet

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will they lead them in most instances into a *righteous practice.*

But altho' in these *practical Notions* and *Opinions*, they are *commonly* a *right*; yet *sometimes*, and to several persons, they prove a *wrong instrument.* For even in matters of *Duty* and *Practice*, men are no more secure from *error*, than they are from *disobedience*; nor more certain that they shall have no mistakes about them, than that they shall not go beyond them. They have, and, till they come to Heaven, ever will have erroneous Opinions as well as Practices; so that these Motives, *Education*, and *Custom*, and *Authority*, will never be wanting in the World, to instill into weak and undiscerning Minds such Opinions, as will, in some instances and degrees, evacuate, and undermine some Duties.

And since there will never be wanting in the World such fallible Arguments and Means of knowing, nor such weak and unexperienced understandings, as must of necessity make use of them: 'Tis plain, that several disobedient Prejudices will in all times get into mens minds, not through the wickedness or disobedience of their Hearts, but through the natural weakness of their Minds, and the fallibility of the means of Knowledge.

And when any prejudices, which lead to disobedience, enter this way, they do not *put us out of God's Favour*, or *destroy a state of Grace and Salvation*; but *consist* with it. For in our whole action of disobedience upon them, there is nothing that should provoke God's Wrath, and punitive displeasure against us. He will not be at enmity with us, either *for acting according to our erroneous Conscience*, or, if the errour was thus innocent, *for having an erroneous conscience for our rule of action.*

He will *not be offended at us*, I say, for *acting according to our erroneous conscience*: for whether our conscience be true or false, it is the only Rule that we can act by. We cannot perform a Duty, unless we understand it; nor obey Laws, before we have some knowledge of them: we must judge what is commanded before we can observe it, and whether we judge right or wrong, we have no way to obey, but by acting according to such judgment. Yea, if our Conscience does err, and

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innocently miſtake our Duty, yet whilſt we follow it in the ſimplicity of our hearts, we perform the *life* and *ſoul of Obedience*, even when we erroneouſly tranſgreſs it. For we do the miſtaken action out of an *obedient intention*; we exert it *for God's ſake*, in an *acknowledgement of his Authority*, and a *reſignation to his pleaſure*; and this is ſo truly the life and ſpirit of an *acceptable obedience*, that, in caſe of ſuch erroneous belief, we ſhould *ſinfully* and *damnably diſobey* ſhould we neglect it. So that if the error of our conſcience it ſelf be inoffenſive, God will not take offence at our well-meant, and obediently deſign'd performance of that, which our conſcience erroneouſly tells us we are bound in duty to perform.

Nor will God be *offended at us, for having ſuch a ſcandal* or rock of offence, as this prejudice and errour of our conſcience is, if the *errour it ſelf is thus innocent*. He will not take it ill, that we did not judge that to be our Duty, which the Principle we had to judge by told us was no Duty, or it may be a breach of Duty and a Sin. For this was truly to judge by Principles, and to have recourſe in judgment to the beſt and likelieſt notions which we could find in our own minds; which way of paſſing judgment is all that we have, and the very method which he himſelf has preſcribed us. Neither will he be angry at us for *admitting ſuch falſe Opinions* into our minds, as ſhould afterwards *miſguide* us, if it were not our *ſins* and *paſſions*, but the *ordinary way*, and *uſual means of knowledge* which got them entrance. For when the very ſame means of information and diſcourſe, which carry us on to truth in other opinions, miſlead us into errour and miſtake in theſe, we err in the honeſty of our hearts, and in the uſe of means and ordinary endeavours; ſo that nothing remains for our errour to be charged upon, but either a *weakneſs of underſtanding*, or an *ill fortune*: either that uſing fallible means, we were not ſo wiſe as to avoid being deceived by them; or that we had the ill hap to be guided by them in ſuch an inſtance, when errour lay at the end of them. And ſince theſe Cauſes of errour, are only our weakneſs and unhappineſs, but not our fault and diſobedience; God will graciouſly bear with us, and will not be extream to puniſh us

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for them. Or if we happen to err in an Instance wherein he will exact Obedience, he will at least bear with us so long, till besides the *plain Declarations* of our Duty, and the *common means* of knowing it, we have had moreover such Accumulation of Proof and clearing of the Case, as will, if we are not wanting to our selves, answer all our Exceptions, and bear down all our Prejudices against it.

And of this we have a clear instance in the Error of the *Apostles*, about the discharge of that great Duty, of *preaching the Gospel to all Nations immediately after Christ's Ascension*. He had enjoyned this in a Command as plain, one would think, as Words can make it. *All Power is given unto me in Heaven, and in Earth; Go ye therefore, and teach*, not the *Jews* only, to whom I sent you at first, but *all Nations*, Matth. 28. 18, 19. preaching *Remission of Sins upon Repentance to all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem*, Luke 24. 47. But for all this Precept was so express, and this Declaration of their Duty was so plain and evident; yet was it not of it self sufficient to give them an Understanding of it. For those prepossessions, which they lay under, drew such a Veil before their Eyes, and linked their Minds so fast to a contrary Belief, that they took no notice of it, nor ever thought their contrary practice to be forbid by it. They thought still, that *Israel was God's peculiar People*, that *the Jews were the only seed of Abraham*, and that *the great Prophet Messiah, whom* Moses *told them God would one Day raise up among them, for eminence and extraordinariness of Divine Commission, like unto him, was to be theirs peculiarly to whom God had promised him*. Their Prejudices and Anticipations of Judgment, had been instilled into their young and tender Minds, by the early *Care* of their *Parents*, and fomented by the *Instruction* of their *Teachers*, and daily more and more confirmed in them, by *Conversation*, and an *uninterrupted Custom of Perswasion*. And being thus forcibly impressed upon them, they had so blocked up their obedient and well-meaning Minds, that when a plain Command required them to practise contrary to this Belief, they did not understand, but over-look it. Insomuch that *Peter* himself was not convinced of it, by the manifest injunction of a clear Law; but stood in need to have

his *doubts solved*, and his *exceptions answered*, and his former prejudices confuted and overborn, by such accumulation of proof and evidence, as God was pleased to give him in a most condescensive Dispute upon that Subject, by an *after* and *repeated* Revelation, *Acts* 10. and 11, Chapters.

But now this ignorance of their Duty, which was so plainly delivered in the words of a clear Law, did not put them out of God's Favour, because it was occasioned only by such hindrances, as were consistent with an honest heart, or such, whereto not their *sins* and *passions*, but their *natural weakness of understanding*, and their *education* and *custom*, those *fallible means of knowledge*, had betrayed them. For God still lovingly embraced them; he bore with their weaknesses, and helped their infirmities; he pitied their ignorance whilst they laboured under it; and because he saw it was fit and necessary that they should get quit of it, he graciously afforded them a further and more powerful evidence whereby to overcome it. And all this pardon and forbearance, I say, they found, because their prejudices were consistent with an honest heart, since they were begot in them not by any lusts or vices, but only by their weakness of understanding, and the fallibility of the means of knowledge.

But as some prejudices which lead to sin and disobedience, get into mens Consciences only through weakness of understanding; and fallibility of means, which are therefore consistent with a state of favour and salvation; so are there,

2. *Several others, which got into their Consciences through the assistance of their lusts and vices*; and these are *deadly* and *damning*.

Mens Lusts and Vices have a great influence upon their minds, and the chief hand many times, I wish I could not say most times, in molding of their evil judgments and opinions. And therefore we may know mens *manners* by their *perswasions about their Duty*, before ever we see their *practices*. For they who will live wickedly, will quickly bring their minds to think wickedly. Their lusts and vices will soon insinuate themselves into their judgments and apprehensions: they will dispose their Souls for such perswasions as are most serviceable to them; and win them with ease into a *belief*,

a *belief*, of evil things, by making them *willing* first, and *eagerly desirous to believe* them.

For our *Belief* of any Opinion, is produced in us by our *diligent Search*, and *Consideration of all such Arguments, as can get credit to it*; and by *over looking* or *clearing such Difficulties*, or *industriously considering* and *improving all the Answers to such exceptions, as are made against it*. As on the contrary, our *disbelief* of any Opinion, is effected by *over-looking* or *weakning all those Reasons which are brought to prove it*, by *darkning it with Difficulties, perplexing it with Doubts*, and raising such *Exceptions* as may shake or overthrow it. But now, as for the Employing of our Wit and Industry in either of these, it is plainly in our own *Choice*, and we deal *indifferently* and *impartially* between both, or espouse either *part*, as we stand affected. If then we are *earnestly desirous* and strongly inclined for *one way*; we can *over-look*, or set our selves to *answer all that makes against it*, and *throw by Difficulties, clear up Doubts, invent Reasons to justifie* and *prove it*. So that the Will and Pleasure of our Hearts, will quickly draw after it the Judgment of our Understandings, and if once we are resolved upon a way, we shall soon find reasons to allow it.

When therefore our Lusts and Vices have got our Hearts, and give Laws to our Wills and Appetites, they will quickly bear Rule in our Understandings also. We shall quickly believe that any of their Gratifications are lawful, when once we are greatly desirous to have them so. Nothing being a more probable, and ordinary effect in the *nature of things*, as well as in the just *judgment of God*, of a *disobedient* and *rebellious Heart*, than a *reprobate Mind*, or a Mind * void of Judgment, *Rom.* 1. 18, 21, 28.

* ἀδόκιμον νοῦν

So long then as Men have *wicked Hearts*, it cannot be expected but that they will too commonly have *debauched Consciences*: For whilst they retain unmortified Lusts and Vices, they will fall too oft to justifie them in their own Thoughts, by damnably sinful, and disobedient Opinions. They will take up Prejudices and a wrong Belief, not to direct and guide their wicked Practice, but to defend it. The *Factious* and *Unpeaceable* Man will easily perswade himself into that Be-

lief, which *disturbs Peace*, and *opposes Government*. The *covetous Soul* will favour any Tenet, which *promotes Gain*, and *advances Interest*. The *licentious Libertine* will snatch at any Opinion, that *gratifies the Flesh*, and pleads the Cause of *sensuality* and *softness*. Men's *Pride* and *Ambition*, their *Fierceness* and *Cruelty*, their *Malice* and *Revenge*, their *Contentiousness* and *Faction*, their *Sensuality* and *Covetousness*, will make them over-look the *Humble* and *lowly*, the *meek* and *gentle*, the *patient* and *merciful*, the *quiet* and *peaceable*, the *generous* and *self-denying* Laws of Christ, and greedily imbibe such *wicked Prejudices* and erroneous Conceits, as *evacuate* and *overthrow* them.

To illustrate this Business, let us consider it in some *instances*.

That execrable Sect of Men the *Gnosticks*, who were so infamous for their *impure* and *lawless Consciences*, were not more notorious for their *vile Opinions*, than for their *evil Lives*. I will consider both, that it may from thence more clearly appear, how influential their Lusts were upon their Minds, in begetting suitable Perswasions.

As for their *Lives*, they were infamous for *Covetousness*, *Cowardice*, and *Softness*, in heaping up Wealth, and avoiding all loss of Goods and bodily Pains, though by means never so wicked and dishonourable: And for the greatest *Luxury*, and *looseness* in their *Lusts* and *Unclean Pleasures*.

They were notoriously infamous, for their *Covetousness*, and abominably *timorous* and *irreligious Compliances*. For they are described as Men, that *have their hearts exercised with covetous Practices*, 2 Pet. 2. 14; that *do any thing because of Advantage*, Jude 16; that forsake the Right Way of Worship and Religion, and go astray from it into the By-paths of * *Idolatry* and *Prophaneness*, when they are like to suffer by it, being thus far fitly compared to *Balaam* the Son of *Bozor*, that they, professing true Christianity, joyn in Idol-worship with the *idolatrous Gentiles*; as he, being a true Prophet, did in the idolatrous Worship of the *King* of *Moab*, Numb:

* *Idolothyta indifferenter manducant, nihil inquinari ab iis putantes*; *& in omnem Diem Festum Ethnicorum, pro voluntate in honore Idolorum factum, primi conveniunt*, Iren. adv. Hæreses, l. 1. c. 1.

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22. 40, 41; and also in that they sort and combine with the Jewish and Gentile Persecutors of the Christians, as he did in *cursing* first, and afterwards in *fighting against the Israelites* in the *Army of Midian*, Numb. 31. 8. upon which accounts, *his Way* or Error they are said to follow, 2 *Pet.* 2. 15. *Jud.* 11. Their Character is to *desert the publick Assemblies*, by reason of the Heat of Persecution against all who dare frequent them, *Heb.* 10. 25. to *deny the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ*, when they are in danger to suffer for their open owning of them, *Jude* 4.

They were also equally notorious, for abominable *Luxury*, and *Lewdness* in their *Lusts* and *unclean Pleasures*. For they are set out to us, as men that are *Sensual*, *Jud.* 19; that *account it a Pleasure to riot in the day time*, 2 Pet. 2. 13; that *defile the flesh*, Jud. 8. that *walk after the flesh in lusts of uncleanness*, 2 Pet. 2. 10. in *pernicious*, or, as it is rendred from other Copies in the Margin of our Bibles, † *lascivious ways*, verse 2. that *have eyes full of Adultery*, vers. 14. and that are not content to riot in these abominable Filthinesses themselves, but use them as Baits to decoy, and draw in others; *alluring through the lusts of the flesh, and through much wantonness, those who* * *really*, or for a † *little while had escaped from such* an abominable *life of errour*, verse 18.

† ἀσελγείαις MS. Alexand. & plur. al.
* ὄντως.
† The Kings MS. ὀλίγως.

Thus was their Life and Temper over-run with *covetousness*, *base cowardice* and *sinful compliances*; and with most *filthy Lusts*, and *Uncleannesses*. Both which St. *Peter* setting himself against, requires all Men, who would be thought to have that *true* and *saving Knowledge*, which is opposite to that *false* and *spurious* one which they * pretended to, to give all diligence in adding to it these *two Duties*, which are directly contrary to their *vile Lusts*; viz. *Vertue*, or Courage and Constancy, which is opposite to their base Arts of Tergiversation; and *sinful Compliances*; and *Continence* or Chastity, which is contrary to their *unclean Practices*. *Give all Diligence to add to Vertue*, or valorous Courage, *Knowledge, and to Knowledge Temperance* or † Continence, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5, 6.

* γνωστικοί.
† ἐγκράτειαν.

Now these Men having such a Scene of Debauchery in their *Lives*, they quickly became as lewd and debauched

bauched in their *Conſciences*. When once for all their *profeſſions of knowing God*, they began, as St. *Paul* ſays, *in works to deny him*; they quickly made their Conſciences, to be as filthy and polluted, as their Practices were. To theſe *defiled* Wretches, ſaith he, *is nothing pure*; *their very mind and conſcience is defiled*; for they have loſt all ſenſe of Purity and Duty, being *unto* * *every good work reprobate* or void of Judgment, *Tit.* 1. 15, 16. They over-looked and disbelieved all the Chriſtian Laws, of *paſſive Valour*, and *patient Courage*, of *Generoſity* and *Contentedneſs*, of *Mortification* and *Self-denial*, *Chaſtity* and *Temperance*; and fell into thoſe Lewd Opinions, for which they were ſo infamous in the *Apoſtolick* Age, and will be ſtill, among all Men that are but competently ſober, to the World's End. For they introduced into the World the ſcandalouſly vile and profligate Opinions, that † *filthy lewdneſs and uncleanneſs*, that ‡ *denying Chriſt to be come in the fleſh in times of perſecution*, and that *our Jeſus was he*, are parts of *Chriſtian Liberty*, and things *lawful* and *allowable*, in a *knowing*, in a *ſpiritual*, in a *perfect* Man. *Turning* by this means, as St. *Jude* ſays, *the Grace of God* and his Goſpel, which under the higheſt Pains forbids and puniſhes them, *into* a Liberty and Allowance of theſe their Characteriſtick Vices, *viz*, *Laſciviouſneſs*, with all manner of Filthineſs, and *denying*, when they are in Danger, to ſuffer for him, *the only Lord God, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Jude 4.

* *Quemadmodum aurum in cœno depoſitum non amittit decoremſuum ſed ſuam naturam cuſtodit, cumcœnum nil nocere auro poſſit: ſicſeſemet ipſos dicunt licet in quibuſc unque materialibus operibus ſint, nil noceri, neque amittere ſpiritualemſubſtantiam.*

Quapropter & intemerate omnia quæ vetantur, hi, qui ſunt ipſorum perfecti, operantur; de quibus Scripturæ conſirmant, quoniam qui faciunt ea, Regnum Dei non hæreditabunt. Iren. l. 1. c. 1. † Concerning Laſcivious Pleaſures being allowed to them, who are perfect and ſpiritual; and denied to others, who, as they were wont to ſpeak, are animal, they taught thus: *Quicunque* in ſæculo *eſt & uxorem non amat, ut ei conjugatur, non eſt de veritate, & non tranſiet in veritatem. Qui autem* de ſæculo *eſt mixtus mulieri, non tranſiet in veritatem, quoniam in concupiſcentia eſt mixtus mulieri. Quapropter nobis quidem, quos* Pſychicos *vocant, &* de ſæculo *eſſe dicunt, neceſſariam continentiam & bonam operationem, uti per eam veniamus inmedietatis locum: ſibi autem ſpiritualibus & perfectis vocatis, nullo modo.* Iren. ib. ‡ *Agrippa Caſtor* ſays, that *Baſilides*, one of the chief Heads, taught thus: Ἀδιαφορεῖν εἰδωλοθύτων ἀπογενομένῃ, καὶ ἐξομνυμένῃς ἀπαρφυλάκτως φωὶ πίστιν καὶ τὰς ἐπὶ διωγμῶν καιρές; As he is cited by *Euſebius Eccl. Hiſt. l.* 4. c. 7. See alſo *Epiphan. Hæreſ.* 24.

Ano-

Another inſtance of their Behaviour, we have ſet down in relation to the *Publick*; *viz.* That they were of a *proud* and *ungovernable*, of a *haughty* and *turbulent*, a *querellous* and *ſeditious* Humour. Their Temper is to be *preſumptuous and ſelf-willed*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 10; which they evidence every where, by *deſpiſing Dominion*, and *ſpeaking evil of Dignities*, Jude 8; and by *murmuring* and *complaining*, as men that are always diſcontented, and never pleaſed with any adminiſtration of affairs, *ver.* 16.

And agreeable to this *ungovernableneſs of their lives* and *tempers*, were the *licentious principles* and *opinions of their minds*. For they were the men, who *promiſed* their Followers *liberty* from all ſubjection, 2 *Pet.* 2. 19. and who deſpiſed all *Maſters* and *Governours*, as being by the new Character of Chriſtianity become their *Brethren*, and therefore, as they argued from that Title, now only *equal* to them, not *ſuperior*, as they muſt be, who would pretend to rule and govern them, 1 *Tim.* 6. 1, 2. The abettors of which Doctrine, St. *Paul* aſſures *Timothy* do in reality *know nothing*, notwithſtanding all the falſe Show of that ſwoln Title, * *knowing men*, which they ſo vainly arrogate to themſelves, *verſe* 4.

*Γνωστικοί.

The wicked Sect of the *Phariſees*, who were the *reproach* of the *Jewiſh*, as theſe *filthy Gnoſticks* were of the *Chriſtian* Name, were of a *life* and *temper proud* and *ambitious*, *covetous* and *rapacious*; whoſe *heart* and *inſide*, as well as their *life* and *practice*; was all *rottenneſs* and *diſobedience*. For if we would have a character of them, our Saviour himſelf has given us one in the 23d. of St. *Matthew*'s Goſpel, which is moſt *compleat* and *particular*; wherein a combination of theſe ſeveral vices, are ſet to make up their deſcription.

Firſt, *Vain-glory*. *All their works they did to be ſeen of men*, verſ. 5.

Secondly, *Pride* and *Ambition*. *They loved the uppermoſt rooms at feaſts, and the chief ſeats in the Synagogues, and greetings in the* publick *markets, and to be called of men Rabbi, Rabbi*, that is to ſay Maſter, or Doctor, *verſ.* 6, 7.

Thirdly, *Covetouſneſs*, *Fraud* and *Rapaciouſneſs*. For beſides that St. *Luke* informs us of their being *covetous*,

Luk. 16. 14; we are told here, that they would moſt prophanely abuſe the moſt *ſacred* things for their *covetous* ends, and *make long prayers* only *for a pretence*, that thereby they might be enabled more eaſily, and without ſuſpicion, *to devour* even Orphans and *Widows houſes*, verſ. 14. being indeed, whatſoever they might outwardly appear to be, *full of extortion and exceſs within*, verſ. 25.

Fourthly, *Hypocriſie*. For they would *diſſemble* even in their moſt *ſolemn performances*, and uſe Religion as a Cover to worldly deſigns. They *made long prayers* only *for a pretence*, verſ. 14; what they *made clean*, *was only the out-ſide*, verſ. 25; for that indeed they beautified, but ſtill they were *all ſtench and rottenneſs within*, verſ. 27.

In ſumm, they *ſaid*, but *did not*; they *bound heavy burdens on other mens ſhoulders*, *but would not touch them themſelves with one of their fingers*, verſ. 3, 4. Yea, take them, even at the beſt, where they were Religious; and that they will be found to have been more in trifles, than in ſubſtantial Duties; for *they ſtrained at Gnats*, at the ſame time that they *ſwallow'd Camels*, *they paid tythe of* cheap and inconſiderable things, ſuch as *mint*, *and anniſe*, *and cummin*; but *they omitted the weightier matters of the Law*, *as Judgment*, *Mercy and Faith*, verſ. 23, 24.

And ſince they were men of this character, thus *unmortified* in their *luſts*, and thus *vicious* and *irreligious* in their *practice*; what can in reaſon be expected, but that they ſhould be full of debauchery and diſobedience in their *conſciences* and *perſwaſions* alſo? And ſo accordingly we find they were. For when Chriſt preached to them the Doctrine of *Charity* and *Liberality*, in oppoſition to their *miſerable worldly* way; they, *being covetous* inſtead of believing, fell a mocking and *deriding him*, Luk. 16. 14. And as they treated Chriſt in this particular, ſo did they likewiſe all the reſt of his Religion. For finding that it required ſuch *humility*, *ſincerity*, *honeſty*, *contentedneſs*, and *heavenly-mindedneſs*, as were inconſiſtent with theſe *unmortified luſts* of theirs which I have mention'd; they would not *own* and *embrace* it, but for that reaſon eſpecially, did *reject* and *diſbelieve* it. Nay further, even in their *own* acknowledged

ledged way, they took up several disobedient prejudices, to serve their lusts; and either wholly evacuated, or in great part impair'd several Laws by admitting such erroneous persuasions as undermined them. For to gratifie their *haughty* and *stubborn*, their *pettish* and *revengeful* humour, they entertain'd a conceit, that *if they* did but *say it is Corban*, or *a gift by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me*; (*i. e.*) I bind my self by the Vow or Oath call'd *Corban*, never more to do any good to thee, which was a form of Oath in use among the *Jews*; they should be freed from all obligation of the *fifth Commandment*, requiring *honour*, *service*, or *relief to their Father or Mother*, Matth. 15. 4, 5, 6. And *many other things like to this*, our Saviour tells us, *they did*, Mark 7. 13. But not to enquire further about *particulars*, we are plainly assured of them in the *general*, that they *transgressed*, *rejected*, and *evacuated the Laws of God*, *through* the erroneous perswasions and prejudicate belief of *their traditions*, Matth. 15. 3, 6. Mark 7. 9.

Thus natural and obvious it is for a *wicked life* to work a *disobedient belief*, and for Mens *unmortified lusts* and *passions*, which set themselves against God's Laws, to convey such *prejudices* into their consciences, as will *evacuate* and *overthrow* them. Their *unbelief* enters through the *corruption* of their *heart*, and is therefore called an *evil heart of unbelief*, Heb. 3. 12. and they *are hardened* into a want of all sense and conscience of their offences, *through the deceitfulness of sin*, vers. 13. And this effect is obvious, and ordinary; for not only the *nature of things*, but even the just *Judgment of God*, concur to it: Nothing being more common, than for *those men*, *who hold the truth*, as St. *Paul* says, *in unrighteousness* of living, *and* even *whilst they know God*, *do not glorifie him* by their service and obedience, which are due to him, and are our way of glorifying him *as God*, *nor are thankful* in their hearts and actions; to lose that knowledge, and *to become vain in their imaginations*, *their foolish heart being darkned*, by *God's giving them over to a reprobate mind*, or a mind void of all true judgment, *to do those things which are not convenient*, not knowing that they are so, *Rom.* 1. 18, 21, 28.

But now as for *these prejudices*, which get into our *consciences* and *perswasions*, not through any *force of rea-*

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ſon which *compells*, but through the *witchcrafts* of *luſts* and *vices* which *enveagle*, and make us *willing* and *deſirous* to believe them; they will *not excuſe* us, becauſe they are themſelves *ſinful*, and *deſerve damnation*. For they enter at an ill door, and win upon us through a reigning luſt, or a damning ſin; and therefore they are ſo far from excuſing thoſe tranſgreſſions which flow from them, that in themſelves they are inſtances and effects of a deadly offence, and, if repentance intervene not, will prove deſperate and damning.

St. *Paul* in *breathing out threatnings* againſt all Believers, and in *perſecuting of the Church*, acted only according to the beſt of his own *Judgment* and *Opinion*. For he verily thought with himſelf, that he not only *might*, but *ought to do ſeveral things contrary to the Name of Jeſus of Nazareth*, Acts 26. 9. But as this Opinion was his ſin, ſo would his tranſgreſſions upon it have proved his condemnation, had not God ſhewn pity on him, in calling him to *repentance* and *converſion*, whereby alone it was that he obtained *mercy* and *pardon*. *I was*, ſays he, *a perſecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy by that Grace of God* conferr'd upon me at my converſion, *which was exceeding abundant*, with theſe two fundamental Graces that are a moſt prolifick ſpring of all the reſt, (*viz.*) *Faith, and Love, which is in Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Tim. 1. 13, 14.

The *Jews*, who *blaſphemed* and *crucified our Saviour*, did nothing againſt their own conſciences: for their Opinion bore them out in all that practice, in regard they judged it to be no *ſinful murther*, but a moſt *neceſſary act of Juſtice upon a great Impoſtor*, and a moſt *laudable* and *legal execution*. *I wot Brethren*, ſays St. *Peter*, *that through ignorance ye did it, as did*, not you only, but *alſo your rulers*, Acts 3. 14, 15, 17. *For had they known it*, ſays St. *Paul*, *they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory*, 1 Cor. 2. 8. But foraſmuch as this Ignorance was their own fault, and their prejudices were owing to their own vices, in regard that for this reaſon alone their minds would not receive a true Belief of Chriſt and his Laws, becauſe they plainly contradicted their ſinful luſts and practices, therefore ſhould it by no means excuſe them, but, if their repentance did not prevent it, it would moſt certainly in the end prove deadly and damning. For their *crucifixion of him*, he tells them, was by *wicked hands*

hands, Acts 2. 23. and it was only upon *their repentance* and *conversion*, *that their sins* of blasphemy and murder *should be blotted out*, Acts 3. 19.

Again, the transgressions of the *Pharisees* were justified by their own Opinions; for they looked upon themselves, notwithstanding them, to be *holy men*, and *favourites of Heaven*. But proceeding, as we have seen they did, from unmortified lusts and a wicked life, they rendred them obnoxious to damnation; *How can you escape the damnation of hell?* Matt. 23. 33.

The sins of the *Gnosticks*, notwithstanding they were warranted by their disobedient Principle, were of a damnable nature. For their *heresies* and *disobedient Principles* themselves, being the effects of disobedient and wicked hearts, *deserved damnation*, and are called by St. *Peter*, in that *Chapter* where he recounts them, and with great zeal inveighs against them, *damnable heresies*, 2 Pet. 2. 1. They are *works of the Flesh*, or the products of unmortified lusts and carnal practices; and must therefore share in the same judgments with other fleshly works, among whom they are reckon'd. *The Works of the flesh*, says St. *Paul*, *are manifest, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness; of the which I tell you, that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21.

If we will transgress our Duty by disbelieving it first, and giving credit to such Opinions as destroy the obligation of it; our disbelief of our Duty will by no means excuse our sin, or rescue us from condemnation. For to disbelieve the *Laws* and *Threatnings of Christ*, is one of the worst parts of *unbelief*, and the most hateful and deadly instance of *infidelity*. And as for *Unbelievers*, says St. *John*, or those men who will not believe *Religion*, or the best part of it, *Laws* and *Duties*, but seek to evade its force after that God has plainly told them thereof; *they shall have their part in the Lake, which burns with fire and brimstone*, Rev. 21. 8. Men *without understanding*, who will not see their Duty, because they are * blinded by such lusts as fight against it, in *the Judgment of God are* † *worthy of death*, Rom. 1. 31, 32. The reason why their consciences adhere to such Opinions as utterly destroy their Duty, is only because their lusts and vices have made them *hate* it,

* Rom. 1, 21, 28.
† Matt. 15. 14.

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and *turn* away from it: And as for every such prejudice against a Duty, as proceeds from our *aversation* to it, it is of a great guilt, and liable to a very severe punishment. For in this St. *Paul* is peremptory: *All they shall be damned who believe a lye, and believe not the truth, through the pleasure which they take in unrighteousness: They shall perish, because they receive not the LOVE of the Truth, that they may be saved by it,* 2 Thess. 2. 10. 11, 12.

When our disobedient prejudices therefore enter upon this score, and are begot in us through a wicked heart, and through some reigning lusts and vices which are served by them; but not by weakness of understanding, or such fallibility of means, as may betray even an honest heart into them: they are subject to a sad doom, and a severe censure; they will by no means plead our excuse, but are an Article of our condemnation.

And as for some marks, whereby to judge whether our disobedient prejudices proceed from this deadly Principle, *our unmortified lusts* and *vices,* and thereupon are of this *dangerous* and *damning nature,* or no, we may observe these *Characters,* and judge according to *these Measures.*

First, If that *Lust* or *Sin* whereto our prejudice is subservient, be *strong* and *powerful, if it reign in us, and, in the ordinary course and custom of our lives, gives Laws to us,* the *corruption* and *disobedience of our heart,* is plainly the cause of our *disobedient conscience* and *corrupt perswasion.* It is not only the errour of our conscience, which makes us serve the sin; for we serve it equally in other instances, where that is wholly unconcerned. The Sin is unmortified and imperious, it carries us on to transgress where it is further'd by the error of our consciences, and where it wants it. But it is the wickedness of our hearts, which makes us to be wicked in our judgments, and to espouse such Opinions as encourage and defend it. For when any lust is so strong in us, as to rule our practice, it will be like enough to lay a corrupt byas upon our wills, so that we shall be apt still to judge in favour of it, and be very partial in all those Opinions wherein it has any interest. And therefore several disobedient prejudices will be taken up

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to serve a turn, and we shall work our selves up into a belief of them for the sins sake, which is justified and protected by them.

Is any man therefore of a temper and conversation, that is *fierce* and *contentious*, *busie* and *restless*, *forward to give Laws*, and *impatient to submit to them*: 'Tis no wonder if he takes up Opinions, that justifie *contempt of Governours*, that avow *Alteration* and *Disturbance*, and countenance *Faction*, *Sedition*, and a *Civil War*. For the ungovernableness of his Conscience is but agreeable to the ungovernableness of his Practice; the Sin reign'd first in his heart and life, and was from thence with ease instill'd into his Opinion and Perswasion.

Is any man habitually inclined to *Pride* and *Ambition*, *Wrath* and *Malice*, *Revenge* and *Cruelty*; is he *greedy of Gain*, and a *Slave* to *sensual Delights* and *bodily Pleasures*? He is prepared, as occasion serves, for any of those *Vile Opinions* which overturn all Laws to promote *Christ's Temporal Power* on Earth, or to advance the *secular* greatness of his *pretended Vicar* and *Holy Church*; and for any others of like nature. For the unmortified lusts are a Law to him in his life, before they come to govern in his Conscience; he is first wicked and rebellious in his heart, and that makes him to admit of such wicked Opinions into his Understanding.

In these men then the case is plain; it is clearly seen how they came by their disobedient prejudices, for their lives and conversation shew that abundantly. Disobedience reign'd first in their hearts, and thence got into their consciences and perswasions.

Secondly, If the *disobedience and the prejudice lay so near*, and *were so close conjoyn'd, that a man could not but see one when he saw the other*; *it is still imputable to his wicked lusts and vices.* For he discerned how obedience was impair'd, and how the Sin was served by it, when he first gave credit to it; and therefore he was plainly acted by a want of vertue and an evil heart. For if he had been touched with any love of vertue, he could not have allowed of that, which he knew would evacuate and undermine it; but he would have shewn much more forwardness to reject the Opinion for the sake of the sin, than to embrace it upon any appearances of argument and reason. So that his prejudice enter'd,

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through an aversation to that instance of obedience which it undermined; and it was his love to the wicked lust which was advanced thereby, that made way for it. He willingly and designedly served the sin, and he saw how much the Opinion contributed to it, and therefore he readily embraced it.

Nay further,

Thirdly, If the sinful consequences were not discerned when a man at first embraced it; yet *if they are such as are of a plain unquestionable guilt*, and *greatly sinful*, and *when he is shewed afterwards how they follow from it, he still stands by it and adheres to it*; however the *prejudicate Opinion might enter at the first*, yet it *holds possession afterwards by a heart that is wicked and disobedient*.

Some sins there are, whose *guilt* is not altogether so *clear* and *indisputable*, but that an *innocent* and *honest*, although a *weak* and *erring* mind, may sometimes question and over-look it. And thus many truly religious Souls do not think, that their *refusing to observe the commands of men about the ceremonies of divine worship, is disobedience*; or that their busie intermedling and *over-acting in the cause of God and Religion, is pragmaticalness*. For these sins, among several others, altho' they are plain an obvious to an *unprejudiced* and *piercing understanding*, which is able to discern the grounds and reasons of things, and fairly to consider of them: Yet to such minds as have fallen unhappily under some mistaken notions, and false prepossessions, they are not evident; whence many men, who have honest and obedient hearts, do yet err and judge amiss concerning them. But then several other sins are so *open* and *notorious*, that no *sober mind*, and *vertuous inclination*, can ever have any *doubts* about them. Thus, for instance, no honest man, who is willing fairly and seriously to consider things, can ever question, I think, that *killing without Commission from Authority, and due process of Law, is Murther*; that *spoils without judicial course, are robbery*; that *appearing in Arms against the supreme Sovereign Power, or men commissioned by him, is Rebellion*, that *intoxicating use of Wine, is Drunkenness*; and a *promiscuous use of Women, Adultery or Fornication*. These sins, and many others, are of so open and notorious a nature, that no man of an ordinary wit, if he has any competent degrees of honesty, can ever

ver apprehend them to be other than damnably sinful. And if any man has any Opinions, which in any cases justifie some of these, if he continues to hold them still after he sees how these sins follow from them, which he must needs do when he practices the same, because the Opinions lead him on to them; 'tis plain that his Opinion holds possession of his Mind, because his heart is wicked: *simplicity* and *ignorance*, it may be, gave it entrance; but *sin* and *disobedience* enable it to persevere.

If the man indeed was only *simple* and *short-sighted*, *rash* and *forward* at the *first*, and either had not *understanding* or *patience* enough, to look on so far as the sinful consequences when he gave it entrance; his lusts and vices at that time could have no share in it, because he did not see how they could be served by it; and so far the simplicity of a well meaning mind, and the obedient temper of an honest heart and a good intention, may plead his excuse for his otherwise wicked and disobedient perswasion. But if afterwards he *persists* in it, when he *sees* all the *iniquity* and *disobedience* that flows from it, and goes on to cancel and transgress *notorious* and *weighty Laws* upon the assurance thereof: 'tis manifest then that his *heart is wicked*, and that he is influenced more by a *reigning sin*, than by a *cogent reason*. For if his heart were acted by a full resolution of obedience, and a love of Vertue, he would quickly renounce such Opinions, when once he saw such notorious and unquestionable Laws to be overturned by them. But since he will stick to his wicked Principle, even when it destroys obedience, and prefer a disputable opinion before a weighty and plain Duty; 'tis plain, that he is not honestly willing to obey, but industrious to seek a shift, and to evade all obligation to obedience.

As for this Enquiry then, *viz.* When our *disobedient prejudices get into our consciences by the help of our own unmortified lusts, and damning vices?* From these measures we may make our own Souls this Answer. If *usually*, and *in the common course of our lives, we are guided by that lust or vice which our prejudice advances*; if *we saw the disobedient effects of it, when we first gave credit to it*; or if *we still adhere to it, after that we have been plainly shewed the unquestionable, and notorious sins, which are avouched*

vouched by it: Our prejudice took place by virtue of our disobedience, and, without our timely repentance, it will condemn us. If it entred *innocently* and *honestly* through the *weakness of our understandings*, or the *fallibility of the means of knowledge*, it would be pardoned, and not imputed to us: But since it gains admittance by our love to damning lusts and disobedience, it is of a deadly guilt, and, unless repentance intervene, will prove our Destruction.

And thus at last we have seen, what ignorance is effected by our prejudices; and what is to be judged of those transgressions, which are incurred under it. And the summ of all is this: That our prejudices make us either *quite over-look several Laws*, or, *even whilst we know and consider of them*, to *venture upon several disobedient actions, which really come under them, not knowing that they do so.* And if such prejudices entred, through the *fallibility of means of knowledge*, and *weakness of an honest understanding*, they are *pardonable* and *uncondemning:* but if they took place by means of *strong lusts*, and a *wicked heart*, they are *deadly sins*, and fit to be charged upon us, as all others are, without *repentance*, to our condemnation.

But seeing it is much *safer*, and infinitely more eligible, to have no dilobedient prejudices at all, than to be put into all this danger about the pardon and forgiveness of them; before I dismiss this Point, I will set down one *plain Rule* and easie Method, in matters of *Duty* and *Moment*, to prevent the same. For by this means, we may all of us attain in good measure to that, which St. *Paul* assures us was his utmost care and industrious *exercise: viz.* a *conscience void of offence*, or rather an * inoffensive conscience, which is no scandal or cause of sin to us, and which doth not stumble and cast us down into any Breach of Duty, either *towards God, or towards men*, Acts 24. 26.

* συνείδησιν ἀπρόσκοπον.

And the *Rule*, which I would press upon all *simple* and *honest Minds* for that purpose, is this, *Begin with Duty and plain Laws, to make them the measure whereby to judge of controverted Notions and Opinions; not with those Notions and Opinions, to make them the measure whereby to interpret plain Laws.*

For

For our Duty is made *plain* and *open*, and expressed so clearly, as that any Ordinary man may understand it. It is no matter of *skill* and *parts*, to *know* Christ's Commandments; but an *honest* and a *teachable heart*, is a better preparation to that, than *refinedness of wit*, and *philosophick learning*. For God, who gave us Laws, knew the measure of all capacities, and the compass of every understanding; and what he intended that all should practise, he wanted not skill to express so plainly, that every one might apprehend it. Laws are the Rule of the last Judgment, and our obedience or disobedience to them is a matter of life or death; and that in all reason and equity ought to be revealed clearly and sufficiently to every understanding, which every man must for ever live or die by. As for Laws and Duty then, they are plain and easie; they are expressed in such clear and intelligible words, as carry what God means by them in their usual and obvious acceptation. So that in judging of them, if we begin there, there is no great difficulty, seeing they are easily and obviously understood by any man, who brings along with him an obedient, and teachable mind, to the obvious understanding of them.

But as for *abstract Notions* and *controverted Opinions*, they generally admit of much *doubting* and *dispute*, and of great *appearance of reason*, and *variety of argument*, on *one* side, as well as on the *other*. And besides, *all capacities* are no *fit Judges* of them, but those only which have much *quickness*, and much *experience*; that can dispel the *darkness*, by *clear evidence*; and help the *confusion*, by a *distinct representation* of things; that can judge of *reasons*, and of *exceptions*, and of the *various degrees in evidence*, and the just weight of arguments. So that they are a matter, not for the determination of *common heads*, but for the *learned* and *witty*, for *refined Parts* and *Philosophers*. Yea, and even among *them*, by reason of their *difficulty* and *doubtfulness*, they admit of *great disputes*, and beget *generally* much *variety* of *judgment* and *opinion*; wherein if some think true, as it is very possible, nay often happens that neither do, the rest must of necessity be mistaken.

Controverted *Opinions* therefore and *Notions*, are more *dark* and *difficult*, less easie to be understood than plain Laws, and much more liable to be mistaken. So that Laws

and Duty are fit to be made a Principle, because we may easily understand them, and be well assured of them: But general and disputable Notions and Opinions, being more dark and liable to errour and mistake, they are not so proper to be themselves a Rule to Laws, as to be measured and judged of by them.

And that they should be so is further reasonable, because in the very designs of God, *obedience* is *primarily* and *chiefly* intended to be *ministred* to by *Revealed Truths*; not *Revealed Truths* to be served, and furthered by *obedience*. For the revelation of *religious truth*, is given by the Author of our Religion himself, in order to *religious practice*. The very end and perfection of our *Faith* being to produce * *Good Works*, to make us † *overcome the World*, to * *save our souls*, or to deliver us from our sins, which are those evils that † Christ came to save us from. And since obedience unto Laws is the *end*, and *general and controverted truths* are only *means* whereby to compass it, 'tis certain that no truth can ever oppose a Duty, or evacuate obedience, because God would defeat his own end in revealing it, should he at any time become the Author of it. So that this cannot be a *proper*, at least it is not a *safe* way of arguing; *this plain Law, in such and such parts, and sorts of instances, contradicts a truth, and therefore it is no Duty:* whereas we should proceed quite contrary, after this manner; *this or that Disputed opinion interferes, and undermines this or that plain Law, so that it can never be a true opinion.* For this arguing is *fair* and *likely*, and withal it is most *secure*. It is sure to preserve *obedience*, because it admits of nothing that interferes with it. And it is also very likely to preserve *truth*; for it is most certain that no Doctrine can ever come from God, which encourages or justifies any wickedness: so that not only an *obedient heart*, but even a *free* and *impartial reason* must quit the Principle, if it appear to draw after it an evil consequence.

* Jam. 2. 22.
† 1 Joh. 5. 4.
* 1 Pet. 1. 9.
† Matt. 1. 21.

To settle Principles and Rules of Judgment then, especially for *simple* and *unlearned* minds, the first enquiry ought to be, not what is *true* or *false* in disputed Points, but what is *good* or *evil*. For since the knowledge of this is more *plain* and *obvious*, *easie* and *accessible* to *all*, but to *them* most especially; 'tis evident, that as all others, so particularly they, if they would secure even *Truth* as well

as

as Duty, must begin with *Laws* as their *Principle*, and from thence make their *inference* to controverted *Doctrines* and *Opinions*. To avoid sinful errours and disobedient prejudices, they must use Laws and Duties, as the measure whereby to judge of such notions; not such notions and opinions as the standard, whereby to measure and interpret plain Laws.

CHAP. VII.

A sixth cause of ignorance of the present actions being comprehended under a known Law. And of the excusableness of our transgressions upon both these sorts of ignorance.

THus upon all these accounts, which are mention'd in the *two* former *Chapters*, we see it will often happen, that although in the *general we do know the Law, which forbids any sin, yet shall we still be ignorant of our present actions being comprehended under it.* For the *small, and barely gradual difference between Good and Evil*, the *limitedness of most Laws*, the *indirect obligations which pass upon some indifferent actions*, the *clashing and interfering of some of Christ's Laws*, sometimes *with other of his commands*, and sometimes *with our own prejudices and prepossessed Opinions*, are all so many reasons, why, after we *know* the *General Laws* which forbid them, we shall still venture upon several *particular actions*, *through ignorance of their being forbidden.*

And yet besides all *these*, which are causes of such ignorance to the most *knowing men*, and to those who have *great parts* and *learning*: there will be moreover one *great* and *general* cause of it to the more *rude* and *ignorant*, and that is the *difficult*, and, to them, *obscure nature of the sin it self, which in the Laws is expressly, and by name forbidden.* For many of them who hear, it may be, of the Law against *censoriousness*, *lasciviousness*, *uncleanness*, *carnality*, *sensuality*, *refusing of the Cross*, and *other* things, do not well

well understand what those words mean. Alas! the greater number of Men in the world, have but very rude and imperfect notices of things; they see them but confusedly, and by halves. And as it is in their knowledge of other things; so is it in their understanding of Sin, and Duty likewise. For their sight and sense of them, is dark and defective; and albeit they have some general and confused apprehensions of them, yet is not their knowledge so clear and distinct, as that they are thereby enabled to judge of every particular action, whether it falls under any of them, or no. And since they have but such half, and imperfect notions of several sins, it is no wonder, although they know the *General Law*, if they venture upon several actions which really come under it, not knowing that they do.

And thus we see, that besides the *ignorance of the Law it self*, there is also another sort of ignorance, which will be a cause of sin to several men of all sorts, and that is their *ignorance of their present actions being comprehended under the letter of the Law, and meant by it.*

But now as for *those transgressions*, which men of an *honest heart* are guilty of, through this *Ignorance of their own actions being included in the Law*, when they do know the Law that includes it: *They do not put them out of a state of Grace, but consist with it.*

For this Ignorance is mens *unhappiness*, rather than their *fault*; it is not an Ignorance of their own *chusing*, seeing their will and choice is against it. For they *desire* to be free from it, and *strive* to prevent it, and *endeavour*, according to those abilities and opportunities which God has afforded them, to get right and true apprehensions of all God's Will, that they may perform it all; and of evil actions that they may avoid them. But it is the *difficulty* and *intricateness of things* which renders them ignorant, and that is not of their making. For the sins forbidden, are not easily distinguished from the liberty which is allow'd, or from the Duties which are commanded in some cases; and therefore it is that they mistake them, and are ignorant of the sinfulness of their present action, when their knowledge of it should enable them, if they would, to avoid it.

And since it has so little of their *own will*, and the men, even when by reason of their ignorance they do transgress, are industriously desirous to know their Duty, and prepared

red to practise it, so far as they do understand it: It shall have nothing of *God's anger*. It is altogether a pardonable slip, and pitiable instance, and that is enough to recommend it to God's mercy. For he is never *rigorous* and *severe* in a case that is prepared for pity and pardon, so that he will not punish, but graciously forgive it.

And if it were otherwise, *who could possibly be saved?* For this *ignorance of their present actions being comprehended in the words of the known Law*, is such as the *wisest* men have been subject to; and they, among the rest, who were most eminently skill'd in all the Laws of God. St. *Paul* is not certain, but that some such ignorance adhered to himself. *I know* or am * conscious of *nothing by my self*, saith he, *but yet I am not hereby justified*, because some such sins may have † escaped my knowledge, 1 *Cor.* 4. 4. *Why*, says St. * *Chrysostome, should the Apostle say that he is not thereby justified, although he is conscious of nothing by himself wherefore he should be condemned? Because it might so happen, that he had committed several acts of sin, which, at the time of acting, for all his knowledge of the Laws themselves, he did not know were sinful.* And this is is no more than *holy David, the man after God's own heart*, thought he had reason to suspect himself for before him; *who*, says he, *can understand his Errours? cleanse thou me from my secret faults*, Psal. 19. 12. The best men in all times, whether *Jews* or *Christians*, have been subject to miscarriages through this sort of ignorance; and God, who is never wanting to the necessities of his servants, has always provided a sufficient atonement and propitiation for them. For under the *Law*, if an honest *Israelite* happen'd to *do any thing which was forbidden to be done by the Commandment of the Lord*, and *wist not that it was forbidden*; *Moses* appointed the *Priests to make an expiation for him*, and several atonements for that purpose are set down, *Levit.* 4. And under the Gospel our Saviour Christ, by * *whom Grace* and Favour is said *to be given much more largely* than it was by the *Law of Moses*, has provided us of a much more powerful,

* σύνοιδα.

† *Nil mihi conscius*, &c. *quia legerat, delicta quis intelligat*, &c. *temperabat sententiæ ne forte per ignorantiam deliquisset.* Hieron. Dial. adv. Pelag. lib. 2. p. 284. Ed. Erasm.

* ἢ τί δήποτε εἰ μηδὲν ἑαυτῷ σύνοιδεν ὁ δὲ δικαίωται; ὅτε συνέβαινεν ἁμαρτῆσαι μὲν αὐτὸν πολλὰ ἁμαρτήματα, μὴ μὲν αὐτὸ εἰδέναι ταῦτα ἁμαρτήματα Chrysost. Hom. 11. in 1 Epist. ad Cor. c. 4. vers. 4. Tom. 3. p. 307. Ed. Savil.

* Joh. 1. 17

and valuable propitiation. He himself, by virtue of his own sacrifice, atones for all such unknown offences; as well as the Jewish Priests did by their Sacrifices, which were prescribed in the Law of *Moses*. For in comparison of the *two* Priesthoods, as to that part of their Office which lay in making these atonements, St. *Paul* assures us, that like as the *Jewish Priests* had, so *Christ can have compassion upon the ignorant*, Heb. 5. 2.

As for those transgressions then, which are therefore *involuntary* and *unchosen*, because we do *not know that the Law which they are against doth comprehend them*; they shall not *finally damn* any man. So long as we have an honest heart, that is ready to perform what it knows, and unfeignedly desirous and industrious to know more, that it may perform it likewise; if in some things still we happen ignorantly to offend, such ignorant offences shall not prove our ruine. For our ignorance will excuse our sin, and make it consistent with God's Favour, and with all the hopes and happiness of heaven.

Nay, even where our *heart is not so honest* as it should be, and we are ignorant of the present actions being comprized under that sin which the Law forbids, through our *own fault*; yet even there our ignorance, although it cannot *wholly excuse*, doth still *extenuate* our *sin*, and proportionably *abate* our *punishment*. Perhaps it is our *rashness*, or *inconsiderateness*, or *violent pursuit of some opinions* and *prejudice against* others, which makes us judge wrong of some particular actions, and not to see that they are included in the prohibition of some known Law, when really they are. Nay so far may our mistake go, as not only to judge them to be no sinful breaches of these Laws, but moreover, to be virtuous performances of others. For our Saviour tells his Disciples, that *the time was coming, when even they who killed them should think that* thereby *they did God good service*, Joh. 16. 2. And St. *Paul* says plainly, that *he verily thought with himself that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth*, Acts 26. 9. All which *murders* and *persecutions* they were *ignorantly* guilty of, not as if they did not know the General Laws against *murder* and *persecution*, but because they thought their present case and actions to be unconcern'd in them, and not forbid by them; nay, on the contrary, to be warranted and injoin'd by other

Laws,

Laws requiring *zeal for God*, and *judgment against false Prophets*.

Now this Ignorance was such, as they might very well have prevented, had they been *calm*, and *considerate*, *humble*, and *teachable*, and would have *hearkned honestly*, and with an *even mind*, to that evidence which *Christ* gave of his being the *Messiah*, which was sufficient to convince any *honest mind*. And this *patience*, *humility*, and *teachableness*, were in their own Power to have exercised if they would; so that they were ignorant in good measure through their own choice, and by a *wilful neglect* of those means, which would have brought them to a true belief, and a right understanding. And since their Ignorance was thus a matter of their own choice, it is their sin and they must answer for it.

But although, being, as I say, their own fault, it could not wholly excuse: yet was it fit to lessen and mitigate their crime, and to abate their punishment. Their account should be less by reason of their Ignorance, and the sinful actions, being committed with a Good meaning, and through a misguided understanding, were much more prepared for pardon, than otherwise they would have been. And this *Christ* himself has plainly taught us, when he uses it as an argument with his *Father* for the forgiveness of that *sinful murder* of the *Jews*, whereof they were guilty in his *Crucifixion*. *Father*, says he, *forgive them, for they know not what they do*; their killing of me, they take to be no sinful murther of an innocent and anointed person, but a vertuous execution of a lying Prophet, *Luk.* 23. 34. And this likewise St. *Paul* experienced, *I obtained Mercy*, says he, for persecuting the Church of God, *because I did it ignorantly*, not thinking it to be a sinful persecution, but a pious service, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13.

Yea, if the *culpable ignorance* be either of the *Law it self*, or of our *present actions being contained under it*; although God should not call us to *repentance* for what we ignorantly committed, and so to *pardon*; yet even unpardoned we shall undergo a *lighter punishment* by reason of our ignorance, than we should have suffered had we sinned in knowledge. For in this Point the words of our Lord and Judge are express, *He who knew not his Masters will, and did things worthy of stripes*; *shall be beaten with few stripes*, Luk. 12. 48.

This allowance the Gospel makes for our sinful actions, so long as we are ignorant, that the Laws, which they are against, do include and comprehend them; though that ignorance were in good measure *culpably wilful*, we should obtain a *milder punishment*; but if it were *involuntary* and *innocent*, we shall be *fully acquitted* and *excused*.

This allowance, I say, there is, whilst *our sin is ignorant*, and our Consciences do not see that the known Law is transgressed by our sinful action.

But if our Consciences should come to *know so much* of the sinfulness of that action which we commit, as to *scruple its lawfulness*: and to be *enlightned so far, as really to doubt of it*: Then is the case quite alter'd, and we cannot plead that we did it ignorantly, because we knew so much by it at least, as should have made us forbear it. For if indeed we *doubted* of it, we knew it was as likely to be a Sin, as to be an innocent Action, because that is properly Doubting, when we suspend our Assent, and cannot tell which way to determine, when we judge one to be as likely as the other, and do not positively and determinately believe the truth of either. And when this is our case concerning any Action, if we venture on it whilst the doubt remains, we shew plainly, that we will do more for sin, than we will for God, and that it has a greater interest with us than he has: Because even whilst we apprehend it as likely to be our sin, as to be our liberty; yet for the sins sake we chuse to venture on it, rather than for God's sake to abstain from it.

This Contempt of God there is in it, in the *Nature of the very thing* it self, although God had no ways expressed himself concerning it. But besides, he has given us an express Rule, *Abstain from all appearance* of evil, 1 *Thess.* 5. 22. And if there be any thing whose lawfulness our *Consciences are unresolved* and *unperswaded* of, St. *Paul* tells us that our commission of it is utterly unlawful whilst that *unresolvedness* remains. *Whatsoever*, says he, *is not of Faith*, or proceeding from a belief and perswasion of its lawfulness, *is sin*. So that if it be about the *eating of meats*, for Instance, *he that doubts is damn'd*, both of God and of himself, *if he eat, because he eateth not of Faith*, Rom. 14. 23.

If

If our minds therefore are so far enlightned concerning any sinful Action, as that we are come to doubt of it, we are no longer innocently, and excusably ignorant thereof. For we see enough by it, to make us chuse to abstain from it; and if for all this we presume still to venture on it, sin lies at the door, and we have it to answer for. We are no longer within the excuse of Ignorance, but we are guilty of a wilful sin, and are got within the bounds of Death and Damnation.

But if in any Action, we know nothing at all of the Law which forbids it; or, after we have known that, if we are still ignorant of its being contain'd under it; if we are not come to *doubt*, but are either in *Ignorance*, or *Errour* concerning it; our Ignorance, if it be innocent, shall excuse our Fault, and according to the gracious Terms of Christ's Gospel, we shall not finally be condemned for it.

And this is true, not only of *simple Ignorance*, but likewise of the two particular *Modes* of Ignorance, *viz.*

First, *Forgetfulness.*

Secondly, *Errour.*

1. Our sins of Ignorance will be born with, if we venture upon the sinful Action through *Ignorance of its sinfulness, which we knew formerly, but have forgotten at the time of acting.* For a slip of Forgetfulness, is no more than befel an *Apostle*, who was for all that a *blessed Saint*, and an *Heir of Life* still. St. *Paul* himself reviles the *High-Priest*, forgetting both his *Duty*, and that that man *was he* whom he spoke to. *I wist not, Brethren*, says he, *that he was the High-Priest*, for had I bethought my self, I should not have spoke so disrespectfully to him, it being thus written, *Thou shall not speak evil of the Ruler of thy People*, Acts 23. 5.

2. Our sins of Ignorance shall be dispensed with, if we are led to commit them through a *mistake of their innocence, when indeed they are sinful*, which is an acting of them through *errour*. For no less a man than *Peter* was drawn into a sinful dissimulation, through an erroneous conceit that his giving no offence, but keeping in with the *Jews* (which was the thing that he aimed at by it) would justifie and bear him out therein. For which St. *Paul* tells us, when *he came to Antioch, he with-*

withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed, Gal. 2. 11, 12, 13. But yet for all this, St. *Peter* was at that time a *true Saint,* and if it had pleased God then to call for him, he had been *undoubtedly an Heir of salvation.*

And to mention no more upon this Point, as they were constant atonements for the errours of the People under the *Law,* so is there provision made for them under the *Gospel.* For *Christ* who is our *High Priest,* as St *Paul* assures us, *can have compassion on the ignorant* and * *erroneous,* or *them who are out of the way,* Heb. 5. 2.

* πλανωμένοις.

So long therefore we see, as our ignorance of any kind, whether of the *Law it self,* or of our *present actions being comprehended by it,* is *involuntary* and *innocent,* so long shall we be *born with,* for all such slips as we incur under it. For God will never be severe upon us for *weakness of understanding,* or for *want of parts,* whilst there is nothing in us of a *wicked heart:* and therefore if our ignorance it self is innocent, our offences under it shall go unpunished.

But here we must observe, that all this allowance for our ignorance, is so far only as it is *involuntary* and *faultless:* but if we *chuse* to be ignorant, our ignorance it self is our *sin,* and will make all our following offences *damnable.* For we must answer for any thing of our own choice; and therefore if we chuse the ignorance, we shall be interpreted to chuse, and so put to answer for all those ill effects which it produces. Those sins which are *voluntary in their cause,* are interpreted to us, as we † Chap. 3. have † seen, and put on our score; so that if we chuse the ignorance which brings them, we shall be adjudged to suffer for them.

Now as for the ignorance and errour of many men, which is the cause of their sins and transgressions, it is plainly of their own *chusing.* They have a mind to be ignorant of their Duty, and that is the reason why they do not understand it. For either they *shut their eyes,* and will not *see* it; or they are *idle* and *careless,* and will not *enquire* after it; or they *bend their wits,* at the instigation of their lusts, to *dispute* against it, that after they have *darkened* and *perplexed* it in their own thoughts, they may *mince* or *evacuate, mistake* or *disbelieve* it. So that if at last they do *not know* it, it is because they do *not desire the knowledge of it,* or *will be at no pains for it,*

or

or *take pains against it, to supplant and disguise it.* And these are they, who are not ignorant against their Wills, but, as St. *Peter* says, are *willingly ignorant*, 2 Pet. 3. 5. And of these, says our Saviour, *This is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and Men love Darkness rather than Light, because their Deeds are evil*, Joh. 3. 19.

And as for such ignorance as this, it will by *no means excuse us before God*; but if we will be ignorant, *God's* will and pleasure is, that we shall *suffer for our sinful ignorance*, and for all *those sins* which we commit under it, which we *might* and *should* have seen and avoided. For all those Laws, which are ignorantly transgressed by us, threaten death; and the ignorance, being of our own chusing, takes nothing off; so that death and damnation rest upon us.

But that ignorance, which can be pleaded to excuse us before God, must be an ignorance that is involuntary; an ignorance, which in the *constitution of our nature* is imposed upon us, and is not *chosen* by us. And a right understanding of this difference in ignorance being of very great moment, I shall, before I dismiss this Point, observe when our ignorance is *voluntary*, and when it is *involuntary*.

First, I will shew *when our ignorance is voluntary.*

As for the *knowledge* of our *Duty*, like as of all other things, it doth not spring up in our souls as an *Herb* doth out of the ground, nor drop into us as the *rain* doth from a Cloud; but it must be *sought* for, and *endeavoured* after, and unless we use the *means* of acquiring it, we must be content to live without it.

The *means of obtaining the knowledge of God's Laws*, and of the *innocence* and *sinfulness of our own actions*, are the *reading of his Word*, the *attendance upon his Ministers*, the *thinking* or *considering upon what we read or hear in our own minds*, and *praying to God to make all these means effectual for our information, and the like*: and if ever we expect to know God's Will, we must put these in practice.

But now, whether we will make use of these, or no, is plainly in our *own choice*, and at our *own pleasure*. For if we will we may * *exercise* them; and if we will, we may as well *neglect* them. And when both these are before us,

* *Nulli homini ablatum est scire utiliter, quærere quod inutiliter ignorat, & humiliter confitendam esse imbecillitatē, ut quærenti & confitenti ille subveniat, qui nec errat dum subvenit, nec laborat.* Aug. de lib. arbit. l. 3. c. 19.

† *Non tibi deputatur ad culpam quod invitus ignoras, sed quod negligis quærere quod ignoras* Auguſt ib.

us, if we refuſe to make uſe of the means of underſtanding, and wilfully † neglect the methods of attaining to the knowledge of ſin and duty, good and evil; if we ſit down without the knowledge of God's Law, it is becauſe we would our ſelves, and our ignorance is a voluntary and a wilful ignorance.

And this is the *firſt* way of our ignorance's becoming *voluntary, viz.* when it is ſo upon a *voluntary neglect of thoſe means which are neceſſary to attain knowledge.* And this in the *Schools* is called a * *ſupine, ſlothful, careleſs ignorance.* And if it be of ſuch things as lay near in our way, and might have been known without much pains, or much ſeeking; it is called † *groſs* or *affected ignorance.*

* *Ignorantia ſupina.* † *Ignorantia craſſa & affectata.*

But beſides *this* ſort of wilful ignorance of our Duty, through a *wilful neglect of thoſe means which are neceſſary to the knowledge of it*; there is *another* which is higher and more enormous, and that is,

Secondly, When we do not only *ſlight the means of knowing God's Law*, but moreover *uſe thoſe of darkning or miſtaking it*,

For our knowledge of things is then made perfect and uſeful, when it is *clear* and *diſtinct*; and our aſſent and belief of things is then gained, when their *evidence is repreſented*, and *duly conſidered of.* But now as for the employing of mens thoughts, in *clearing* or *obſcuring*, in *believing* or *disbelieving* of the Laws of God; it is perfectly in their own power, whether to uſe it on *one* ſide, or on the *other.* And commonly it is their pleaſure to uſe it on the worſe. For they will conſider only of the *difficulties* and *intricacies* that attend, or that miſemployed wit can raiſe about God's Law, which may *darken* and *diſturb, puzzle* and *perplex* their thoughts about them; and attend only to ſuch *exceptions* as they can make againſt them, which may unſettle their minds, either about the *meaning*, or the *truth* of them: So that after all their *reading* and *conſidering* of them, they ſhall not truly underſtand them, but *err* and *miſtake* them. As it happens to all thoſe, who have diſputed themſelves out of the knowledge of their Duty, until, as *Iſaiah* ſays, *they call evil good, and good evil, put darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs*, Iſai. 5. 20.

And

And when Men are ignorant of their Duty, because they chose thus to endeavour it, and take pains for it; this ignorance is *voluntary*, and *wilful* with a witness.

These *two* reasons of mens being ignorant of their Duty, *viz.* their *neglect of such means as are necessary to the knowledge of it*, or their *use of the contrary means of darkning or discrediting it*, are the causes of their *wilful ignorance*.

And that which makes them guilty of both these, is either the *gross idleness*, or the *profligate wickedness of their hearts*, which are wholly enslaved to some beloved lust or sin. They are *wretchedly idle*, and therefore they will not learn their Duty, because that is *painful*; they are *greatly wicked*, and so care not for the knowledge of the Law, because that would disquiet them. *Men love darkness*, says our Saviour, *better than light, because their works are evil; they hate the light, and will not come to it, lest their deeds should be reproved by it*, John 3. 19, 20. because they *hate* and *fear* the Law, they *neglect* the means of knowing it; nay, they *pick quarrels* with it, and endeavour all they can to *perplex* or *darken*, to *evacuate* or *disparage* it.

So that our ignorance is then *wilful*, when we are therefore ignorant, because we *neglect the means of knowledge*, or *industriously endeavour to be mistaken*. And that because we are either too *idle to learn*, or too *wicked to care for* the knowledge of our Duty. The *idleness* and *wickedness of our hearts*, is the *first spring*; and the *neglect of means* and *industrious perverting of the truth*, are the great *productive instruments* of our *wilful* ignorance. Which is therefore called *voluntary* and *wilful*, because the *Principle* and the *Instruments*, the *motive* and the *means* to it, are both under the *power* and *choice* of our *own wills*.

And *these* things making our ignorance *wilful*, *viz.* a *wilful neglect of the means of knowledge*, or a *wilful perverting of those Laws which we are to know*, we shall easily discern.

Secondly, What ignorance is *unwilled* and *involuntary*; namely, that which implies a freedom from, and an absence of both *these*; so that unto it there is required,

First, An *honest heart*.

Secondly, An *honest industry*.

First,

First, In all *involuntary* ignorance, it is neceſſary that we have an *honeſt heart*. We have St. *Paul*'s word for it, that our receiving of the *love of the truth*, is neceſſary to a *ſaving belief*, and *underſtanding* of it. *They who believed not the truth, but believed lyes*, fell into that miſcarriage by this means, ſays he *becauſe they received not the love of the truth, that they might be ſaved*, 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 10, 11, 12. And our Saviour has taught us, that an *obedient heart*, is the ſureſt ſtep to a *right underſtanding*. *If any man will*, or is willing to *do God's Will, he ſhall know of the Doctrine* which I preach, *whether it be of God*, John 7. 17. The heart or will muſt in the firſt place be obedient, and unfeignedly deſirous to know God's Will; not that it may *queſtion* and *diſpute*, but *practiſe* and *obey* it. For a failure here, ſpoils all beſides. Becauſe the Heart and Will is the Principle of all our actions; and if it be againſt obeying any Law, it will alſo be againſt underſtanding it; and ſo will be ſure to make us neglect, and omit more or leſs, the means of coming to the knowledge of it. To prevent therefore all wilful defects *afterwards*, care muſt be taken in the *firſt* place, that our hearts be honeſt, and truly deſirous to be ſhewn our Duty, be it what it will. They muſt entertain no Luſts, which will prejudice them againſt God's Laws, and make them willing, either to over-look, or to pervert them. But they muſt come with an entire Obedience and Reſignation, being ready and deſirous to hearken to whatſoever God ſhall ſay, and reſolv'd to practiſe it whenſoever they ſhall underſtand it. Of their ſincerity in which Reſolution to practiſe it as ſoon as they ſhall come to know it, beſides their own ſenſe and feeling, they cannot have a greater Argument, than their being careful to be found in the practice of ſo much as they know already, without which it is not to be expected, that they ſhould be perfecter in their practice by knowing more.

This *Honeſty* and *Obedience of the Heart* then, is neceſſary in the firſt place to make our ignorance involuntary, becauſe we ſhould wilfully omit the means of knowledge, and become thereby wilfully ignorant, if we wanted it.

But then as an effect of this Honeſty of the heart, to make our ignorance involuntary and innocent, there is yet further required,

Secondly,

Secondly, An *honeſt Induſtry*. For the knowledge of our Duty, as was obſerved, is not to be got without our own ſearch, but we muſt enquire after it, and make uſe of the means of obtaining it, before we ſhall be poſſeſſed of it. We muſt *read good Books*, which will teach us God's Will, but eſpecially the *Bible*; we muſt be *conſtant* and *careful to hear Sermons*; *attend diligently to the inſtructions of our ſpiritual Guides*, whom God has ſet over us for that very purpoſe. We muſt ſubmit our ſelves to be *Catechiſed by our Governours*, *taught by our Superiours*, and *admoniſhed by our Equals*; begging always a Bleſſing from God to ſet home all their inſtructions upon our Souls. And after all, we muſt be careful, without *prejudice* or *partiality*, to think and meditate upon thoſe things which we read or hear, that we may the better underſtand them, and that they may not ſuddenly ſlip from us, but we may remember and retain them.

All theſe are ſuch means, as God has appointed for the attainment of ſpiritual knowledge, and laid in our way to a right underſtanding of his Will. And they are ſuch, as he has placed in every Man's power, for any of us to uſe who are ſo minded. So that if we are ignorant of our Duty through the want of them, we are ignorant, becauſe we were willing to be ignorant. But if ever we expect that our ignorance ſhould be judged involuntary, we muſt induſtriouſly uſe all thoſe means of knowledge, which are under the power of our own Wills, whereby we may prevent it.

And as for the *meaſures* of this induſtry, (*viz.*) *what times is to be laid out upon it*, and *what pains are to be taken in it*, that is ſo much, as in *every one*, according to their ſeveral abilities and opportunities, *would be interpreted an effect of an honeſtly obedient heart, and of an unfeigned deſire to know our duty, by an honeſt man.* For God has not given all men, either the ſame abilities or opportunities for knowledge; and ſince he has not, he doth not expect the ſame meaſures from them. He doth not reap where he has not ſown, but that which he exacts, is, that *every man according to his opportunities, ſhould uſe and improve that Talent*, be it more or leſs, *which was intruſted with him*, as we are taught in the *Parable* of the *Talents*, Mat. 25. And to name that once for all, we have this laid down by our Saviour as an *univerſal Maxim* of God's Govern-

Government; *unto whomsoever much is given, of them shall much be required.* Which is the very same equitable proceeding, that is daily in use among our selves. *For to whom men have committed much, of him they will exact the more,* Luke 12. 48.

If any man therefore is industrious after the knowledge of God's Will, according to the measure of those abilities and opportunities which God has given him; he is industrious according to that measure, which God requires of him. All men have not the *same leisure:* For some are necessarily taken up by their place and way of life, in much business, some in less; some have their time at their own disposal, some are subject to the ordering of others. And all have not the *same abilities and opportunities:* For some are able by study and reading to inform themselves, some have constant need of the help and instruction of others; some have most wise and understanding teachers, and may have their assistance when they will, others have men of meaner parts and attainments, and opportunity of hearing them more seldom. But now of all these, whose leisure and opportunities are thus different, God doth not in any wise exact the same measure. No, one shall be excused, for what another shall be punished; but if every man endeavours according to his opportunities, he has done his Duty, and God has accepted him.

And in the *proportioning* of this, where there is first an *honest heart,* God is not hard to please. For he knows, that besides their Duty, men have much other business to mind, which his own constitution of Humane Nature has made necessary; and he allows of it. The endeavours which he exacts of us, are not the endeavours of *Angels*; but of *men,* who are soon wearied, and much distracted, having so many other things to employ us. But he accepts of such a measure of industry, in the use of all the means of knowledge, as would be interpreted for an effect of an hearty desire to know his Laws, by any *honest man.* For where there is first an *obedient heart,* God will not be *equalled,* and much less *out-done* by the best of men in pity and kindness. Which is the argument from which our Saviour himself concludes, that God will give the *holy Spirit at our prayers,* because that *men* themselves, who are infinitely below him in goodness, *will give good gifts to them that ask them,* Luke 11. 13.

Let

Let us therefore take care in the first place, to *secure our selves of an obedient heart*, and to *give such evidence of an honest industry, as any kind-hearted and honest man would accept of*; and then we may have just reason to be confident, that although our *endeavour* is *weak* and *imperfect*, being much *hindred* and *often interrupted*, yet shall it still be esteemed sufficient. For *Christ* himself, who is to judge of its *sufficiency*, is no *stranger* to our *weaknesses*, but having felt them in himself, he is prone to pity and pardon them in us. He experimented the *backwardness of our flesh*, and the *number of our distractions*, and the *tiredness of our powers*, and the *insinuations and strength of temptations*. So that having such an *High Priest* to interceed for us at present, and to judge us at the last day, *who is touched with a feeling of our infirmities, having been tempted himself in all points, even as we are: let us come boldly unto the throne of Grace*, as the Apostle exhorts us, *that we may obtain mercy* for what we cannot master, as well as *find grace in a seasonable time of need* to conquer what he expects we should overcome, *Heb.* 4. 15, 16.

And this merciful connivance at our imperfections, and gracious acceptance of our weak endeavours, we may with greater reason and assurance hope for; because *Christ* our Judge will be most *candid* and *benign*, in putting the best sense, and in interpreting most to our advantage, all those our actions and endeavours, which shall then be brought before him. Whereof he has given us a clear instance in that most favourable construction which he made of the *Charity*, that was shewn unto his *Brethren* by those on his *right-hand*, Matt. 25. For although it was not expressed to him, but only to their *fellow Christians for his sake*; yet because their kindness reached him in the intention of their minds, and what they did to his servants for his sake, they would have done to himself much rather could they have met with an opportunity; he resented it as if it had been really shewn to his own Person. For when they say unto him *Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee*; *or naked, and cloathed thee*, &c. he answers, *inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren*, I take the affection for the performance, and interpret it as if *you had done it unto me*, vers. 40.

When therefore the *sufficiency* of our Endeavours after the Knowledge of our Duty, is come to be enquired into by our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, we may be assured that it will have a favourable Tryal. It is to be censured by a *candid, equitable,* and *benign Judge*, who will interpret it to our Advantage, as much, nay, more than any *good-natured honest Man* would. So that if our Industry after the Knowledge of God's Will be in such a measure, as a candid and benign Man would judge to be a sufficient effect of an obedient Heart, and of an honest Purpose; Christ will judge it to be so too.

And where our Ignorance of any of Christ's Laws is joyned with an *honest Heart*, and remains after *such an industry*; we may take Comfort to our selves, and be confident that it is *involuntary* and *innocent*. If we are *desirous to know God's Laws*, and *read good Books, frequent Sermons, hearken to any good Instructions* which we meet with, and that according to our *Opportunities*, and in *such measure* as any *good Man* would interpret to be an honest Endeavour after the Knowledge of our Duty if it were to himself: If after all this, I say, in some Points we are still *Ignorant*, our Ignorance is *involuntary*, and shall not harm us; it is not chosen by us, and therefore it will never be charged upon us to condemn us.

And thus we have seen, what *Ignorances excuse our Slips* and *Transgressions*, which are committed under them; and when those *Ignorances* are themselves *involuntary* and *innocent*, so as that we may comfortably expect to be excused upon the account of them. And the Summ of all that has been hitherto discoursed upon this Subject, is this. That as for the *Laws themselves, all Men* must needs be ignorant of some of them for *some time*, and *some Men* for *all their Lives*, because they want either *Ability* or *Opportunity* to understand them. And as their *present Actions being comprehended under them*, that many Men of *all Sorts* and *Capacities*, after that they have *known the General Laws*, will still be ignorant of it likewise. For as for the *wise* and *learned*, the *small* and *meer gradual Difference between Good and Evil in some Instances*, the *allowed Exceptions from the generality of others*, the *indirect Force and Obligation of a third sort*, and the *frequent Clashing and Interfering*, whether of *Laws with Laws*, or of *Laws with their repugnant Prejudices*

judices and Opinions; will be sure to make *them* very often *over-look it*. And as for the *Rude* and *Ignorant*, besides all *these* Causes of such Ignorance which are common to them with learned Men, the *difficult* and *obscure nature of several Vices and Vertues themselves*, which are plainly and expressly forbidden or enjoin'd, will be of Force sufficient to make the *generality* of them in many Instances *not to understand* it. And as for the *Pardon* and *Excuse* of our Ignorance and unknown Transgressions, from *all*, or *any* of these Causes; that it is *involuntary* and *innocent*, so long as it is joined with an *honest Heart*, and remains after an *honest Industry*; and begins then only to be our *wilfull Sin*, and an *Article* of our *Condemnation*, when *our Lusts or Vices introduce it*, and *we have a mind to it*, and *take no Pains against it*; or, what is the Consummation and Height of all, *industriously labour and endeavour after it*.

And this may suffice to have spoken of the *first* Sort of *want of Knowledge*, which, as I said above, produces an *uncondemning Involuntariness*, (viz.) *Ignorance*, when we *commit Sin, because we do not know the Sinfulness of our present action, or the Law which we sin against*.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Sin consisting through the second Cause of an innocent Involuntariness, viz. *Inconsideration*.

HAving in the foregoing Chapters discoursed largely of the *first* Cause of an *innocent Involuntariness*, viz. *Ignorance of our Duty*, or want of a *general Knowledge*, I proceed now to the *second*, viz. *want of particular Animadvertence* and *Consideration* of what we know, which is *Inconsiderateness*. And this is the *second* way of rendring our Transgressions *pardonably involuntary*, which I proposed above; namely, *when in any sinful Action we do not bethink our selves, and consider of its Sinfulness*.

It is not *all Knowledge* of our Duty, that renders every particular Sin againſt it *choſen* and *voluntary*. For a Knowledge that is only *general*, and *at ſuch Time as the Thing occurrs to our Thoughts*, and *we are asked the Queſtion*, will not make it ſo. But we muſt know and conſider of that action in particular, that it is againſt the Duty. For all Choice pre-ſuppoſes Right and Knowledge of what is choſen. And if we do not ſo, that the particular Action is a Tranſgreſſion of the Duty, it cannot be ſaid that we chuſe to tranſgreſs it thereby.

But now *this* is the *Caſe* in ſeveral of our Tranſgreſſions, *they ſlide from us without this actual Application of our minds to them*. For we do not think and conſider of the Evil that is in them, when we commit them; and ſo their ſinfulneſs being unſeen, it is withal unchoſen.

And theſe Slips ſtealing from us without our *conſidering* and *thinking* on them, or *adverting* in the Application of our Minds to them, are called by theſe ſeveral Names, which are all of the ſame ſignification, *viz.* Sins of *Inadvertency*, *Incogitancy*, and *Inconſideration*. Which becauſe they are ſuch, as, through the Weakneſs of our Natures, we are *continually* ſubject to, and liable *daily* to incurr, are ſtyled in another Word Sins of *daily incurſion*.

Now as for this *ſecond* Sort of Sins, our *inconſiderate Tranſgreſſions*, they may ſteal from us *involuntarily* and *innocently*, upon as many Grounds, as there may be innocent *Cauſes* of *Inconſideration*. And as for the unwill'd, and therefore innocent Cauſes of Inconſideration, I ſhall reduce them to theſe *three*.

1. *Suddenneſs* and *Surprize of Opportunity*.

2. *Wearineſs*, and

3. *Diſcompoſure, and Diſturbance of our thinking Powers, wherewith ſhe ſhould conſider*.

1. The *firſt* Cauſe of Inconſideration in our Actions, whereupon we venture upon ſome Sin without thinking or conſidering of it, is the *Suddenneſs of the Opportunity*, and *the Surprize of Temptation*. † *To make it involuntary, it muſt be ſudden*, ſaith S. *Clement* of *Alexandria*. The Opportunity for the Sin falls out unexpectedly, and it ſtays for us at ſuch time, as our Minds

† Τὸ μὲν ἀκούσιον αἰσθητόν. Clemens Alex. l. 1. c. 2.

are

are otherwise employed; and so we act it without considering, because it lies ready and prepared for us just then, when we have no Leasure for Thinking and Consideration. And the first Beginnings of a *sinful Passion*, whether of *Anger*, of *Envy*, &c. and the *unadvised Slips of the Tongue* in *rash Censuring*, in *uncharitable Speaking*, in *indeliberate Backbiting*, and the *like*, generally enter this way. For they come upon us in the *Throng of Conversation*, and Opportunities are offered for them before we foresee them; and so we spring out indeliberately to act and exert them.

And this inconsideration is such as *we cannot avoid*. For we have no freedom of *Acting* there, where we want a Freedom of *Thinking*, seeing we cannot chuse without Consideration. But as for these inconsiderate Slips, they steal from us before we can bethink our selves, and stay not for our Consideration, but run before it. For our operative Powers, when they are spurr'd on by any thing of an *inward desire*, or of a remaining *corrupt Inclination*, (and who, as long as he lives here, can be wholly freed from it?) are ready of themselves to spring out into Action and Practice upon the first Offer of Temptation, and stand in need of Reason and Consideration, not to raise and excite, but to restrain and repress them. So that upon the Offer of a fit Occasion, we act many times amiss before we are aware; and we cannot help it, because we cannot deliberate first and consider of it.

But as these Slips of Surprize, are such as we cannot avoid; so are they such withal, as God will not exact a severe account of. He will not *punish* but *pity* us for them, and in great Mercy dispense with them.

For they are *necessarily incident to all Men*; they have been incurr'd by his best Servants, but were never looked upon to be of that provoking Nature, as to put them out of his Favour, or to interrupt their state of Salvation and Acceptance.

Just *Noah*, through his Ignorance of the Strength of Wine, was *drunken* before he was aware, or could discern what effects the Fruits of his *new Vineyard* would have upon him, *Noah drank Wine*, says *Moses*, *and was drunken*, Gen. 9. 21. But this was perfectly a Mixture of *Surprize* and *Ignorance*; for he had lost his Sen-

ſes before he thought thereof, or ever knew that the Wine which he drank would rob him of his uſe of Reaſon. For it was at his *firſt* Planting of a Vineyard, before he underſtood what Meaſure of it would cauſe Intoxication. *He began*, ſays the Text, *to be a Husbandman, and he planted a Vineyard, and he drank of the Wine of his* new *Vineyard, and was drunken*, v. 20, 21.

The great Apoſtle St. *Paul*, was guilty of a ſudden Slip towards *Ananias* the High Prieſt, who, whilſt his Mind was intent upon the Speech which he was making in his own Defence, commanded him to be ſmitten on the Face. Upon which unexpected occaſion, he was ſurprized into a *ſudden Anger*, and into an *unadviſed irreverence*. *God ſhall ſmite thee, thou whited wall*, ſays he preſently to him again, *for ſitteſt thou to judge me according to the Law, and* yet *commandeſt me to be ſmitten contrary to the Law?* Acts 23. 1, 2, 3. But as ſoon as he had ſpoken the Words, he retracts them, and confeſſes his Speech was evil; but yet pleads that it was pardonable, as being altogether unconſidered through the ſuddenneſs of the Occaſion. *I wiſt not, Brethren*, ſays he, *that he was the High Prieſt*, or I did not think of that; for if I had, I ſhould not have ſpoke ſo diſreſpectfully to him, it being thus *written*, *Thou ſhalt not ſpeak evil of the Ruler of thy people*, v. 4, 5.

2. Another innocent Cauſe of Inconſideration, whereby we venture upon ſeveral Actions without thinking of their Sinfulneſs, is the *natural Wearineſs of our Faculties* or *Underſtandings*. It is natural for our Minds to be tired out, by being held long and conſtantly to one thing. We find it is ſo with us, in all ſtudies whatſoever: For let our Thoughts be employed upon what we will, they cannot be kept at ſtretch upon it for a long time together, but either we muſt draw them off and relieve them, or elſe they will flag and fail of themſelves.

But now as for ſome Sins, they are a *continued temptation*. They do not ſoon come upon us, and go off as ſoon again; but they lie before us and ſtick to us, and for a long time are ſtill alluring and ſoliciting us. And here, although our Minds can conſider of them, and watch againſt them for ſome time; yet by reaſon of their long abode with us, they wax faint at laſt

and

and grow weary and forgetful: and then the temptation gets ground, and enters when we are not aware, and in some thing we prove unadvised, and yield to it, because we cannot hold out longer to consider of such things as should guard and preserve us from it.

Thus in *afflictions* and *sickness*, for instance, by the uneasiness of his flesh, and hardness of his condition, a man is tempted to *fret* and *murmur*, and to be *peevish* and *repining*. But for some considerable time he stands upon his guard, and his thoughts are in readiness; and so long he represses his passion, and keeps it under: so that although the sin be importunately offered, it is not embraced. And if the temptation would pass off, whilst he stands thus prepared to watch against it, all were well, and his Vertue would remain in safety. But on the contrary, it is *lasting* and *permanent*, it sticks to him, and incessantly importunes him, and so proves a continual snare to him. And now if his *mind* would endure to be held *always upon the stretch*, and in a continued watchfulness against the same, all were well, and he would keep back from it still. But alas! his faculties after a long toil, grow *weary*; and his Powers of thinking, being constantly imployed, are *spent* and *disabled*, and then his watchfulness begins to impair, and his thoughts by degrees to unbend; and whilst he becomes less attent, and less careful to oppose the Temptation, it wins ground, and prevails upon him when he is not aware: so that although he could not at *first*, yet he is surprized at *last* into some *impatient thought*, or *peevish behaviour*. And the case is the same, in a *continued provocation*, to *Anger*, *Lusts*, or *other* sins.

Now this *weariness*, which renders us thus inconsiderate, is no matter of our own chusing. For it is the very frame of our Nature, and not the effect of our Will; so that we must submit to it, and cannot help it. For the *Soul*, in *thinking* and *understanding*, uses *bodily powers*, and they by exercise are *spent* and *wasted*, *weakned* and *enfeebled*: and therefore when by a fixt watchfulness and consideration of one thing, they have been kept long attent, they naturally grow weak and weary, and there is no avoiding it.

And since we cannot help it, God will never exact of us that we should; but when he comes to judge us

for those slips which were inconsiderate upon this account he will not punish us, but in great mercy pardon and bear with us.

And this we find that he has always done. For his *best Servants* have been wearied into slips of this nature, and yet they have not put them out of a state of Grace, nor made a breach in God's acceptance; but he has own'd and rewarded them as his faithful Servants still.

Job was a man patient to a *Proverb*, and one to whom by the testimony of God himself, there was *none equal in the whole Earth; a perfect and an upright man, one who feared God, and eschewed evil*, Job 1. 8. But yet this man of admirable Constancy and Patience, was *wearied* out of his watchfulness by a tedious Tryal of Afflictions, and in that time of his unadvisedness, uttered many things *impatiently* with his lips. For after he had watched sore by himself, and kept silence, continuing still his noble Patience when his Friends came to pity him, and stood amazed at his condition for *seven days* and *seven nights* together: at last being over-charged with grief, and wearied off from his guard against it, he burst out into a *rash* and *foolish cursing of the day of his birth*, and into many *repining Questions*, and *fretful Answers*, Job 2. 12, 13. and *Chap.* 3. But yet notwithstanding all these, and several other fretful expressions of a tired mind, God owns him for his *dear Servant* still, and honours him in the end with a most noble mark of a *particular affection*, by accepting of *his Sacrifice, for his Friends*, when he would not accept of it *from themselves*, Job 42. 8.

David, the man after God's own heart, when in great fear he flies from *Saul*, and after several escapes made from one place to another, could not either weary or avoid him; being tired out of all patience and composure, at last, begins sinfully to call in question the *truth* of *God's promise*. For although *Samuel* had (*a*) come from God to *anoint* him King, and had thereby in God's Name assured him of the Crown, yet, after a long confidence in God's Faithfulness, he begins at last, in the tiredness of his spirit, to doubt within himself whether God would be as good as his word, and to *say in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul*, 1 Sam. 27. 1. Which he did, as he himself gives the account

(*a*) 1 Sam. 16. 13.

count of it, only because the *weariness* of his mind, through his continued and repeated dangers, had made him *hasty* and *inconsiderate*. *I said in my haste*, saith he, *I am cut off from before thine eyes*; referring in all likelihood to this very case, *Psal.* 31. 22.

Good *Asaph* by the continuance of those troubles which he bemoans, is wearied into a like offence. For altho' he guarded his spirit well at the beginning, and for some time; yet after he had laboured much, and reflected long upon that affliction, he breaks out at last in the discomposure of his soul, into these *repining thoughts* and *distrustful Expostulations: Will the Lord cast off for ever, and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever, and doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious, and hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?* Psal. 77. 7, 8, 9. But when once he had got liberty to recollect his thoughts, and to recover his former guard again; he doth not any longer give way to these *distrustful surmises*, but immediately suppresses and corrects them. *Then I said*, as he goes on, *this is mine own infirmity*, v. 10.

3. A *third* innocent Cause of inconsideration in our Actions, is the *discomposure* and *disturbance of our thinking powers, which should consider of them.*

Our Souls as I said, are united to our Bodies, and make use of their powers, in their most *spiritual* actions of *Knowledge* and *Apprehension*. And therefore upon any ruffling discomposure in our bodily Spirits, our thoughts are ruffled and discomposed likewise. They see nothing clearly at such times, nor have any distinct notices of things; but are clouded and confused even as our bodily powers themselves are.

Now that which thus discomposes our bodily Spirits, so as that our Souls can see and consider of nothing through their disorder, is either *strong Drink*, or a *strong Passion*. For so much is all exercise of reason and consideration, disturbed and hindred by these, that of men in *drink* or in a *high passion*, it is usually said, that they are not themselves, and that they have not their wits about them.

But although either *Wine*, or any *violent Passion*, are *sufficient Causes* of disturbance in our spirit, and of discomposure in our thinking powers, which unfit us to consider

ſider of what we do during ſuch times as we are diſturbed by them; yet are not both of them *innocent*, and able to excuſe thoſe inconſiderate ſlips, which we commit by reaſon of them. For *drunkenneſs* is always our own fault, and if we ſin unadviſedly through its diſcompoſure, we ſhall certainly ſuffer puniſhment, becauſe that is a diſcompoſure of our own ſeeking.

As for our *paſſions* indeed, they are cauſes of an *ambiguous quality*. For ſometimes they grow ſtrong in us by our *own fault*. Either we feed them, or we indulge them; we ſuggeſt ſuch things to them, as will foment them; or we permit them to grow unruly of themſelves, without checking and repreſſing of them, as we might and ſhould do, were we ſo minded. And when our paſſions are thus indulged, and the violence of them is of our own chuſing; they are themſelves our *ſin*, and ſo cannot plead our *excuſe* and *vindication*.

But then at other times, they are *forced upon us by the power and ſuddenneſs of outward objects*, whether we will or no. For we hate them, and are afraid of them; and if we were aware, we would ſtand upon our guard, and call in all the Aids of Reaſon and Religion againſt them to preſerve us from being too much diſturbed thereby. But God's Providence caſts them upon us on the ſudden, ſo that we do not ſee them before they come, nor can conſider aforehand to prevent and avoid them. And when once they are come, by their very natural force in diſturbing of our Spirits, they take away from us the power of conſideration. So that they are unconſidered in *themſelves*, and unconſidered in their *effects*, and therefore they are involuntary all the way. And when our paſſions are made violent this way, *viz.* by being raiſed in us, not by any thing of our own *ſearch* or *indulgence*, but by the *timing of God's Providence*, and by the *ſuddenneſs* and *greatneſs of outward objects*, they are *pardonable in themſelves*, and will *excuſe our inconſiderate tranſgreſſions*. Thoſe ſlips which we incurr under them are prepared for Pardon, becauſe we did not ſeek, nor could avoid them.

Thus then our innocent Diſcompoſures, which unfit us for conſideration, are thoſe only, which are cauſed in us by ſtrong paſſions not of our own indulging. The paſſion which begets them, muſt enter againſt our Wills,

through

through the *greatness* and *suddenness of outward objects*; it must be forced upon us suddenly and by surprize, and then we cannot refuse it, or the discomposure which ensues upon it, because we have no time beforehand wherein to consider how to prevent it.

Now it is not every passion, which the power of outward objects can force upon us on such a sudden. For *love*, *desire*, and all those passions which have *good for their object*, are more under our own Command, and spring up in us more *gradually*. They arrive not to such a discomposing pitch in a moment, but they require more time, and go on more leisurely; and in all the intermedial steps, they are subject to our own power, so that we may arrest them, if we please, before they have got so far. And therefore all the inconsideration which they effect in us, is more or less wilful, and a matter of our own choice, because it proceeds from our own permission and indulgence.

But then, as for other passions, of *grief*, *anger*, and *fear* especially, which have *evil* for their object; if the *opportunity be sudden*, and the *object great enough*, they may be raised in us to such a degree, as to *amaze* and *confound us in a moment*. A man may be in such a fright upon the sudden, as not to know what he doth, as we see by daily experience; and the case is the same in the others likewise. And the reason of this difference, between *these* passions and the *former*, is this, because the *suffering of evil*, is far more repugnant to *self-preservation* and *self-love*, which are the fundamental principle of all our passions, than the *absence of good is*. For if we sit without that good, which would move our *love* and *desire*, we are still where we were: but if we fall under that evil, which excites our *fear*, we are made miserable, and much the worse: that is only a denial of a farther light; but this is a real deprivation, and a step towards destruction. And since our self-love and self-preservation, are so much more nearly concerned in the suffering of evil, than in the absence of good; our passions, which are only their several aspects and expressions, must needs be more quick and violent in that, than they are in this, and the discomposure upon them will be so likewise.

This

This difference there is, betwixt our *inconsiderateness* upon the *violent fears of evil*, and upon our *violent desires* and *pursuit of good*. Which is observed by our *Saviour*, in an instance where both were *criminal*; in which notwithstanding, the discomposure upon the *fears of evil*, being fit to plead the more excuse, made the transgression that ensued upon it to be a lesser sin. For both the *Jews* and *Pilate*, concurred in the grievous sin of shedding *innocent blood*, when they *crucified* and *murthered him*. In which wicked action that which moved them, was (*b*) *envy* and *malice*; but that which prevailed with *him*, was his *fear of their calumnies*, and of the *anger of the Roman Emperor*. For in his *own heart*, he was minded to (*c*) *release him*, being *convinced of his innocence*, and (*d*) *afraid* to have any hand in the Blood of one who *called himself the Son of God*. But because he *called himself a King*, which his own (*e*) Mind could not but suggest to him, as the (*f*) *Rabble* did afterwards, was a Title whereof the Emperor would be extreamly jealous, therefore he gives him up to their Will, fearing lest, if he did not, he should be traduced as no Friend to that most jealous Prince *Tiberius Cæsar*. And when *Christ* himself comes to pass Judgment, in comparison of *his* offence and *theirs*, *He who delivered me unto thee*, saith he, *hath the greater sin*, John 19. 11.

(*b*) Matt. 27. 18.
(*c*) Joh. 18. 38, 39.
(*d*) John 19. 8.
(*e*) John 18. 33.
(*f*) 19. 12, 13.

Those discomposures then of our knowing Faculties, which are innocent, and fit to excuse our inconsiderate slips which proceed from them, are such as spring from an *unwill'd sudden grief*, or *anger*, but especially from an *unwill'd sudden fear*.

To make it *unwill'd*, I say, and as I observed before from *Clemens* of *Aleaxandria*, it must be sudden; for if our *fear* it self, which is a passion that amazes more than all the rest, doth not presently effect any thing, but stays some considerable time, and reigns long before it produces any sinful action: Then it is a matter of our *own choice*, in regard it is a fear of our *own indulging*. We give it room and entertainment, we feed it, or give way to it; and that makes our fear to become our sin, which can never serve for our vindication.

For a true *Christian*, must be as *bold* as a *Lyon*, and fear nothing so much, as the *disobedience of his God*, and the *breach of his duty*. But as for other things, which men

men use to be afraid of, whether they be loss of *Fame*, of *Estate*, of *Friends*, of *Liberty*, or even of *Life* it self; tho' he may justly fear and avoid them, when he can *innocently*; yet, if they are the *burden of the Cross imposed upon the doing of his Duty*, he must chearfully (*g*) *take it up*, and not fear and fly from them, but overlook and contemn them. For God will make us an abundant Recompence in the next World, for any thing which we part with for his sake in this. And therefore he indispensibly requires us, as in all reason he very well may, not to fear and shrink from the loss of any thing, even of life it self, when he calls for it; but in stedfast Faith of his Promises, and hope of his Rewards, most couragiously to undergo it. *Persecutions* and *Dangers*, which are the great objects of our fears, are the chiefest tryals of our obedience, for which reason they are so often in Scripture called (*h*) Temptations; and therefore their business, is to evidence how much we will part with for obedience, but by no means to excuse us when we disobey. But in relation to them, Christ's command is this: *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but fear him, who can cast both body and soul into Hell*, Matt. 10. 28. And if we suffer our fears of them, to chase us away from the owning of his Religion, or from the performance of his Will; his Sentence against us is plain and peremptory: *Whosoever is ashamed of me and my words*, and dare not own them, although it be *in* a *Generation* that is *sinful and adulterous*, wherein he will be sure to suffer for the profession of them, *of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the Glory of his Father, with his holy Angels*, Mark 8. 38.

(*g*) Matt. 16. 24, 25. and Chap. 10. v. 37.

(*h*) 2. Pet. 2. 11. 1 Cor. 10. 13. Jam. 1. 2, 3.

As for all *Fear* then, *which drives us from our Duty*, it is our *fault*. And when we *stand* and *pause* upon it, and have time to *deliberate* and arm our selves against it; if we fear still, our fear is our *wilful* and *deadly sin*, and doth not *excuse*, but *deserve our condemnation*. And such was the *fear of Peter*, that made him *deny his Lord*, which cost him so many *penitential tears* to wash off the stain thereof, *Matt.* 26. 75. And, in an instance of a smaller crime, such was the *indulged fear of Abraham*, when, to *save his own life*, he exposed his *wife Sarah*, and *Pharoah* King of *Egypt*, to the danger of an *adulterous mixture*,

* Τῇ μοιχείᾳ τῆς γυναικὸς αἰσχύνεται κοινωνῆσαι ὁ Δαυὶδ, καὶ μόνον οὐχὶ ὑπηρετήσασθαι τῷ μοιχῷ εἰς τὸ τῆς γυναικὸς ὕβρειν, ἵνα τὸ θανάτου διαφύγῃ. ἀλλ' ὅτι τυραννὶς. πρόσωπον. Chrysost. Homil. λξ. in Gen. c. 12. v. 12, 13. p. 259, 260. Tom. 1. Ed. Savil.

mixture, Gen. 12. 11, 12, 13, 15, &c. Concerning which Action St. *Chrysostome* thus discourses: * *He participates in the Adultery of his Wife, and doth in a manner minister to the Adulterer unto his Wife's reproach, only that he himself may avoid a present death. And this he did, because his mind was still subject to the Tyranny of death, the sting of it was not yet taken out, nor his fears of it subdued; but the face of it was ghastly and terrible above his courage.* And a like sinful practice upon a *deliberate fear*, we meet with in *Isaac* in the *same case*, who was a *true Child of Abraham*, in his *infirmities*, as well as in his *piety*, Gen. 26. 7.

And that because ὅ πω ἦ καταλυθεῖσα τὸ θανάτου δέος ἀλλ' ὅτι ἦν τὸ κέντρον αὐτοῦ σβεσθὲν. ἔτι γὰρ φοβερὸν ἦν αὐτοῦ τὸ

But that *Fear*, or *Grief*, or *Anger* which makes an *excusable* and *innocent discomposure*, must be *sudden* and *surprizing*. It must seize on us suddenly, and disturb our thinking powers unawares, and carry us on to transgress before we can recover our selves from the discomposure. And when it doth so, it is forced upon us, and is not chosen by us; we are hurried into it without our own consent, and cast upon it whether we will or no. And since the inconsideration it self is thus involuntary, the slips upon it are excusable, and such as God will not severely punish, but has been always prone to pardon and dispense with.

David, the man after God's own heart, when he received the sad News of *Absolom's being slain*, was *suddenly transported* into a very *impatient*, and *indecent height of sorrow*, 2 Sam. 18. 33. and Chap. 19. v. 2. 4.

(*k*) Jer. 15. 2.

Samuel who was a Person so dear to God, that if he could be (*k*) *intreated* by any man, he tells us it would be by *him* or *Moses*, *standing to intercede before him*, did yet in an instance, that would have drawn him into the *hazard of his life*, *dispute God's Command* when he should have *performed* it, and *question*, where in duty it became him to *obey*. For when God bid him *go* and *anoint King David*, which service was sure to draw upon him the *cruel* and *implacable hatred of Saul*, through the sudden force of that frightful thought, instead of *obeying*, he

he *answers again*, saying, *How can I go? for if Saul hear of it, he will kill me*, 1 Sam. 16. 1, 2. And a like instance we have of *Moses's infirmity*, when God was for sending him upon an Errand as hazardous, and much more difficult, *viz.* his *deliverance* of the *poor oppressed Israelites* from the cruel *Bondage* of the *powerful Egyptians*, Exod. Chap. 3, and 4.

And *Paul* and *Barnabas*, two great *Apostles*, and most eminently pious Servants of Jesus Christ, in the *bitterness of dispute* and * *heat of quarrel*, are so hasty and unadvised, as through the sudden resentment of that contest, to *separate companies* and *part asunder*, Acts 15. 37, 38, 39. * παροξυσμός.

And since these slips of inconsideration, through a *sudden Grief*, *Fear* or *Anger*, were incident to the most *perfect Saints*, and the most *assured Favourites* and *Heirs of Heaven*; 'tis plain, that they are a fit matter of God's Mercy, and will be graciously born with and forgiven, but not severely punished by him.

As for our *slips of inadvertence* then, and *inconsiderate transgressions*, whether we are inconsiderate through pityable *surprize*, or *weariness*, or *discomposure of our thinking Faculties*, they are such *innocently involuntary sins, as shall not at the last Day be charged upon us*; they do not *unsaint a man*, or *destroy a state of Salvation*, but *consist with it.*

But to prevent mens *false confidences of pardon, and groundless hopes of being excused* upon this Head; I think fit to subjoin these *Cautions*, about inconsiderate sins.

1. No known Sin or Transgression of a known Duty, is innocently inconsiderate, *where we have time*, and *our understandings being undisturbed, are able to make use of it.*

If we have *Time* to think, but our minds are *troubled* and *distempered*, which makes them unfit to think, and consider in it, as it happens in the cases of a *great weariness*, and a *violent sudden passion* mentioned above; there, 'tis true, we have no choice which God will punish, because we have not all that is necessary to consideration. But if we have *ability* and *power*, as well as *time* and *leisure*, our thoughts are at our own choice, and if we transgress inconsiderately, the fault is our own; for we might have helped it if we would, and if we will not, we must answer for it.

2. No

2. No known sin is innocently inconsiderate, which is of a *mischievous nature*, and *greatly criminal*. For if a man has not brought himself into a *habit of sin*, and under a *great hardness of heart*, (which is always his own fault, and subjects him to a most dreadful punishment) his own Soul must needs *give back*, and his *Conscience boggle* at every *great offence*; and where he doubts and demurrs, he cannot say he is rash and inconsiderate. No man therefore can be guilty of a known Act of *Idolatry*, *Blasphemy*, *Perjury*, *Sacrilege*, *Adultery*, *Murder*, *Sedition*, *Rebellion*, *Theft*, *Slander*, or any other of those sins, which are so great a Terror even to *Natural Conscience*; and yet say he *wist it not*, and ventured on them when he did not think of it. For if his Conscience had any thing of that *tenderness*, which it should and would have, unless he has sinned it into *numbness* and *stupefaction*, he could not commit any of these without *checks of mind*, nor ever come to be guilty of them without *fears* and *doubtings*, *disputes* and *conflicts* in his own Soul. He must consider them over and over, and view them on one side and on the other, before he can be able to master his own fears, and work himself into courage sufficient to venture on them.

As for *lesser* sins indeed, a mans Conscience has not so quick a sense, nor so great a dread of them; and therefore he may be surprized sometimes into the commission of them, before he considers of them. A good man, may speak a *rash word*, and be *carelesly angry*, or *triflingly peevish*, through *surprize* and *suddenness*; but he cannot *contrive the death of his Neighbour*, or *stab a man to the heart*, *without fear and consideration*. He may be insnared unawares, into a *wanton eye*, or a *lascivious thought*; but he cannot fall into an act of *fornication* and *adultery*, till he might look about him, and should bethink himself. He may rashly and unadvisedly be guilty of an *uncharitable censure*, of a *surly behaviour*, of a *discourteous*, *uncondescensive*, *uncandid* action; but he cannot utter a known *slander against his neighbour*, or entertain *malice*, *wrath*, and *implacable enmity* against him, without deliberation, unless it be his own fault that he will not deliberate and consider of them. He may run before he bethinks himself, into a *covetous wish*; but not into *fraud* and *circumvention*, into *theft* and *robbery*, into *perfidiousness*

ousness and *Oppression*: And the like is observable in other Instances. These *lesser* Sins, which are acted in more *haste*, and need less Deliberation, because Men's Consciences are less sensible and afraid of them, they may, and very often do commit inconsiderately and unadvisedly; they are surprized into them, before they bethink themselves, and consider of them.

But then as for *greater Sins*, which either *imploy Thoughts* and *Contrivance*, or *require Time* and *Leisure*, or for the heinousness of their Guilt, are *frightful unto Conscience*; we can have no Excuse of Inconsideration, when we fall under them. Some, I say, *imploy Thought* and *Contrivance*, as *Fraud* and *Circumvention*; others *require Time*, and frequently a long Stay upon the very Commission of them, as *Rapes* and *Adulteries*, *Thefts* and *Robberies*, *Drunkenness* and *Revellings*, *Wrath*, *Anger*, and *Malice*; and all of them are *frightful* and *terrifying*, to any *honest*, and *truly tender Conscience*. And when we think and contrive for them, or dwell long upon them, or are frighted with them, and put into Doubts and Disputes, Fears and Demurs about them; it is gross Contradiction to say, that we did we wist not what, and committed them when we could not consider of them. So that as for any known Sin, which is of a *mischievous nature*, or *greatly criminal*, unless it be our own Fault, and we have made our Consciences hard and callous, we cannot venture on it without considering it, because we cannot act it without Checks and Fears of Conscience about it.

3. No known Sin is innocently and involuntarily inconsiderate, which *we do not endeavour and strive against*. To *endeavour* against all Sin, is in our own Power, and at our own Choice; altho' it be not perfectly so, to *overcome* it, and get free from it. For our endeavours are our own, and are either put forth, or omitted, at our own Pleasure; so that it is only because we would have it so, if they are wanting. And therefore if we are inconsiderate, because we refused, and wilfully neglected to prevent it; our Inconsideration enters upon our own Choice, and is so far owing to our own Will. For we were willing to come under it, and would not strive against it; and so far as it was willed by us, it may be charged upon us, and imputed to condemn us.

Let no man therefore indulge himself, in inconsiderateness of sinning, and take no Pains against it, but quietly submit to it, out of a fond conceit of being excused upon his Inconsideration. For if he makes no Opposition to his Inconsiderateness, but carelessly lays himself open to it, and idlely waits for it; he makes it cease to be wholly his Infirmity, and to become more or less his Fault: Because it is so far an effect of his own Will, as it is of his wilful Negligence; and as he wills it, he shall not be excused, but put to answer and account for it.

But if any Man expect to have his inconsiderate Slips excused, as involuntary and innocent, he must not indulge to them, or quietly wait for them, but seriously endeavour and strive against them. 'Tis true indeed, he cannot *resolve against* ever being overtaken with any, because he cannot *live free from all*; and what a Man cannot perform, it is down-right Folly and gross absurdity, to resolve upon the Performance of. No Man in his Wits, resolves to be as *wise* as *Solomon*, to *support a Mill-stone* by his own Strength, or to *destroy* a *vast Army* by his *single Valour*. For since these things cannot be done by him, if he understands what he doth, he cannot resolve to do them. And therefore as for the being wholly freed from all Infirmity, and never falling by Inconsideration; 'tis absurd for any Man to resolve upon it, because no Man here can ever attain unto it. But altho' we cannot resolve against ever falling into inconsiderate Slips; yet can we endeavour to get quit of them all, and strive against them. For *we may endeavour to do, what is not to be done*; and do as much of it as we can, although we are not able to do it all. St. *Paul* himself *endeavoured*, and exhorts *all others who were perfect* to such acceptable degrees as he was, to endeavour with him, after a state of *absolute Perfection*, although none of them all would ever be able in this life to arrive thereto, *Phil.* 3. 14, 15. They could not resolve upon it indeed, because they could not compass it; but they could and ought to endeavour after it, and to attain so far as they had Power, when they could not so far as they desired. And after that rate, must we strive against all inconsiderate Transgressions also. For although we shall never get wholly free from them, yet still must we take Pains against them; but if they

they seize upon us through a neglect of our own Endeavours, they seize upon us through our own will; and then they are unfit to be judged involuntary.

4. No known Sin is *innocently* and *involuntarily inconsiderate*, except *we are sorry after we have committed it, and beg God's Pardon for it. When thou art reproved* for thy rash and unadvised Miscarriages, says the wise Son of *Sirach, shew repentance*; and *so shalt thou escape* the Guilt of *wilful sin*, Eccluſ. 20. 3. *Aristotle* has long since observed, that *Ignorance* it self doth not render an Action *involuntary*, unless we are *troubled* at it afterwards, when we come to understand it. For *(m) that act of Ignorance only is involuntary*, says he, *which we afterwards with Grief repent of.* When we come to know that Evil, which we ignorantly committed, we must have an indignation at it, and beg God's Forgiveness of it; and then both our Inconsideration, and Ignorance, may be judged Involuntary and Innocent; but without that, in Reason they cannot. For if our Wills are not displeased with our Offence, when once we come to discern our selves guilty of it, nor seek, by begging God's Pardon, as far as may be to undo it; it is manifest that really they were not against it. They did not chuse it, 'tis true, when it was acted, because then they were not made to see and reflect upon it; but afterwards they make it their own as much as they can, by shewing how readily they are bent and inclined for it. They are not at all sorry for it, nor repent of it, but take a Pleasure and Delight therein; and what can any Body judge from thence, but that they avow it?

(m) ἀκού-σιον δὲ τὸ ὀπίλυπον, ᾧ ἐν μετα-μελείᾳ. Arist. Eth. ad Nicom. l. 3. c. 1.

If therefore we would have it thought that our Ignorance and Inconsideration, were at any time against our Wills, we must evidence *that*, by shewing how much we are troubled and displeased therewith. Our Wills must express their Dislike of what is done, and utterly disclaim and renounce the same; or else it will be readily inferred, that they either had, or would have had a Hand in it.

After all *these Marks*, whereby to judge of an *innocently*, and *involuntarily inconsiderate Sin*; I presume I have no need to add, That it must be such as is *unobserved when we venture on it.* For if we see and observe it, it is not possible that it should be any longer inconsiderate. And therefore no Man may look upon his Sin,

and say, Is it not a little one, and yet after that venture to commit it with a Confidence of being excused for it. For no *known* and *wilful Sin* is little in God's Account, whatsoever it be in *ours*, but *every Offence with open Eyes, and with a convinced Conscience, is deadly and damning*. The Man who presumed wilfully to *carry a Burthen of Sticks upon the Sabbath Day*, under the Law of *Moses*, was (*n*) *struck dead* as surely, as he would have been, for *going to Plough*, or *trading at the Market*. Although this seems to be a *little Instance*, yet was it no *small Offence*; for be the matter that a Man disobeys in what it will, yet a *contempt of God*, and a *wilful rejecting of his Law, can in no case be little*. And therefore if at any Time we see and observe a Sin, we must by all means avoid it; or else our willing Offence will certainly subject us to the Curse, and prove of a Size sufficient to condemn us.

(*n*) Numb. 15. 36.

And these are such *Conditions*, as are necessary to make our *inconsiderate Slips*, *involuntary* and *innocent*. And therefore, as ever we expect that the forementioned Inadvertencies should excuse us, we must take Care that they have all these Requisites. We must never *be guilty of them, where we have Time and Understanding*, nor *in any great and mischievous Sin*, nor *without a serious endeavour against them before*, and a *sorrowful Repentance* and *Desire of Pardon for them, after we have committed them*. All these must concur in us, before our Inconsiderateness excuse our Sin, and rescue us from Danger of Damnation.

And now I have gone through both the Particulars, of our *involuntary*, because *unknown Sins*, whether their Involuntariness proceeds from *Ignorance*, or *Inconsideration*; neither of which shall be rigorously dealt with, or imputed to us for our Condemnation.

And thus at last we see, what in the beginning of this *Book* I proposed to enquire of; *viz. What are the Mitigations of that Integrity of Obedience, which is the Gospel-condition of Happiness, and What are those Defects, which it bears and dispenses with*. And the Result of all is this: *That the Integrity of Obedience, which the Gospel indispensibly exacts of us, is an Integrity of our chosen Actions*. And therefore *if wittingly and wilfully we transgress any one Commandment, we are under the Curse which*

the

the Gospel threatens; but if we transgress several unwittingly, and against our Wills, we are out of the Reach of it, and intire in God's Account still. We do not lose our Integrity, or break the Condition, *by every slip of unwill'd Ignorance*, whether that whereof we are ignorant, be *some Law that forbids any Sin*, or *our present Actions being forbid by it*: Nor *by every Slip of involuntary Inconsideration*, whether our inconsiderateness proceed, from *suddenness* or *surprize*, from *weariness*, or from the *discomposure* and *disturbance of our thinking Faculties.* For not any of these Failings will *deprive us of that, which Christ's Gospel will construe to be a perfect and entire Obedience*; they do not *destroy a State of Grace* and *Salvation*, but *consist* with it.

And all these *Allowances*, the Gospel makes to our *sinful Actions*; besides some others to our *Thoughts* and (*o*) *Desires*, which are Sin only in an *imperfect Birth*, and not yet arrived to the Guilt of a *compleat Transgression*, as I shall have a fit occasion to shew, in answering of those *groundless Doubts* and *Scruples*, *that perplex good and honest, but weak Minds*, which shall hereafter follow.

(*o*) See Book 5. Chap. 4.

But the great Condition of the Gospel, being nothing less than an *intire Obedience*; and the generality of Men, being so *maimed* and *defective in obeying*: what shall become of them? For who is there but at one time or other has willingly transgressed some of those Laws which I have described? And therefore if the Curse take place upon every wilful offence, then woe be to all Mankind.

And so indeed it would, if *Christ* had not taken pity on us, and come into the World for this very Purpose, that he might succour and relieve us. But the very End of his coming amongst us, was to find out a Remedy for all these Evils. He came to rescue us from the Curse of the Law, and to procure for us new Terms, and put us into a Capacity of Pardon. So that whatsoever his Laws threaten, or whatsoever we have committed; yet are we still secure from Suffering, if we make use of his Remedy, *i. e.* if we *repent* of it; as shall appear in the *next* Book.

BOOK V.

Of the Remedies, which restore Men to a State of Salvation when they are fallen from it, and of some needless Scruples concerning it.

CHAP. I.

Of Repentance, which restores us to God's Favour after Sins of all Sorts.

HAving hitherto insisted largely upon that *Integrity of Obedience*, which the Gospel indispensibly requires of every Man to his Salvation; and upon those *Defects*, which either *destroy*, or *consist* with it: I proceed now to enquire, *what Remedies it direct us to, for recovering a state of Grace and Favour, when at any time we happen to fall from it.*

Among the *Jews*, according to the strictness of the Law of *Moses*, the Punishment took place upon the first wilful Breach; and therefore in those Laws which were established under Pain of Death, when it appeared by sufficient Evidence that any Man was guilty of the wilful Transgression of them, the Sentence was unavoidable, and the Man died without Mercy. *He that despised Moses's Law*, saith the Apostle, if it were in an Instance whereto the Law threatned Death, *dyed without mercy*, being convicted *under the testimony of two or three Witnesses*, Heb. 10. 28. A Man who had committed *Murder*, or *Adultery*, or any other Crime, whereof *Death* was the *established Penalty*, was to die without all Remedy; for no *Sacrifice* would be accepted for him, nor would the Law admit of any *Favour* or *Dispensation*. And therefore *David*, when he made his Peniten-

nitential Pſalm, for *murdering Uriah*, and *adulterating his Wife*, expreſſes the *Legal Unpardonableneſs* of his Offence in theſe Words------*thou deſireſt not Sacrifice, elſe would I give it; but thou delightſt not in Burnt-offerings* for ſuch Sins as I ſtand guilty of. No, my Crimes are of that Nature, for which any Man leſs than a King ſhould die, and ſuch as no Sacrifice will be accepted for, *Pſal.* 51. 16.

This was the rigour of that *Political Law*, which God impoſed upon the *Jews* by *Moſes*; thoſe Puniſhments that were threatned by it, which were *temporal* and of this World, were irreverſible, when once they were incurred.

But when *Chriſt* came into the World, his buſineſs was to give Laws of a much more gracious nature, which would admit of a Salvo for every Sin, and offer Men a Remedy, which if they did but uſe, although they had tranſgreſſed, they ſhould not ſuffer Puniſhment.

This *gracious Covenant*, whoſe Promiſes and Rewards are *future*, and to be enjoyn'd in the next World, was publiſhed more or leſs, ever ſince *Adam*. For by the Grace of this all the holy *Patriarchs* hoped for Pardon; and by it likewiſe, all the *Good Men* among the *Jews*, when they ſhould be brought to God's Tribunal in the next World, hoped to be forgiven. But the promulgation of it under *Moſes*, was *dark* and *obſcure*, and lay hid in great meaſure, and almoſt buried under the Crowd of the *rigid* and *inexorable Laws* of the *Moſaick Covenant*.

But when *Chriſt* came into the World, his Errand was to abrogate all the Rigour of *Moſes's Law*, and to preach an *univerſal Pardon* upon *Repentance*. And of this, he gave them a clear Inſtance in the caſe of the *Woman*, who was taken in the very *Act of Adultery*. *Moſes*, ſay they, and that very truly (*a*) *commanded us* in his Law, *that ſuch ſhould be ſtoned*; *but what ſayeſt thou?* Joh. 8. 5. But his Sentence was, *Go and ſin no more, and then will not I condemn thee*, *v.* 11; which was a fit Sentence for that Religion, *whereby they ſhould be juſtified from all thoſe things, from which they could not be juſtified by the Law of Moſes*, Acts 13. 39.

(*a*) Lev. 20. 10.

Whatſoever it was therefore under the Rigour of the *meer Law* of *Moſes*, under the *Religion* and *Law of*

Christ, our Case is not become quite desperate and irrecoverable upon the first Offence. It is not every *wilful Sin*, and much less our *Slips of Ignorance* and *Inconsideration*, which can for ever exclude us from the Favour of God, and incapacitate us for his Mercy. No, the Religion of Christ is not a Religion that seeks Advantages of us, and shuts us up close Prisoners of Damnation, as soon as we are guilty of any thing which may deserve it: For Christ need never have come into the World for that end, since the Law had rendred us accursed and miserable enough already. But quite contrary, he came to be the Minister of Life and Pardon, to procure for us Remission of all our deadly and damning Sins, and to restore us out of a State of Enmity and Death, to a State of Mercy and Reconciliation. He came to find out a Remedy for all our Evils, and to prescribe us a way of recovering our selves when we had fallen by any Sin; so that although none of us all have lived free from it, yet in the event Sin shall not be our Ruin.

And that Remedy, which God has provided us for this purpose, is *Repentance*. He doth not abandon us upon the Commission of every Sin; but *he is heartily desirous that we should repent of it*, and when we do so, *he has obliged himself by his Truth and Faithfulness to forgive it*.

He is *heartily desirous*, I say, *that whensoever we commit any Sin we should repent of it*. If we dare take his own Word, he tells us, *as he lives, that he doth not delight in the Death of any Sinner, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live: Turn you, turn you*, as he goes on, *from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?* Ezek. 33. 11. And this all the World experience by him, in his *long-suffering* and *forbearance* with them. For he doth not exact the Punishment, so soon as we have incurred it; but expects long to see if we will return and repent, that then he may with honour pardon and remit it; this being, as St. *Paul* assures us, the End of his *Forbearance* and *Long-suffering, to lead us to repentance*, Rom. 2. 4. And what St. *Paul* says, that we all *experience*. For during all that time wherein he bears with us, how *restless* and *unwearied, earnest* and *affectionate*, are his *Endeavours* for this Purpose? He *admonishes us of our Faults, by his Word*, and *by his Ministers*;

sters; he *invites us to return, by his Love, and by his Promises*; he *moves us to bethink our selves, by his Spirit*, and *by his Providence*; and if we are *stubborn*, and not to be thus gently won by these *methods of mildness*, he seeks to reclaim us by a *blessed* and a *most affectionate force* and *violence*. For he *corrects* us with his *Rod*, and visits us in chastisement, and never ceases to try all means of reducing us to a sense of our sin and repentance for it, till we are become *plainly incorrigible*, and *utterly rebellious*, and so fit for nothing but to be *swallowed up of ruin*. And yet even then, his desire of reclaiming us is so *strong*, and his love so *affectionate*, that he scarce knows how to give us *over*. *How shall I give thee up*, saith he, *O Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, O Israel?* Hos. 11. 8.

And *when we do repent*, I say, *he has obliged himself by his Truth and Faithfulness, most graciously to forgive us.*

This was the Doctrine of the Prophets. *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord*, says *Isaiah, for he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon*, Isa. 55. 7. *If the wicked man*, says God by *Ezekiel, will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.* All his *transgressions, which he hath* formerly *committed, shall not be mentioned unto him, but in his righteousness, that he hath done* since, *he shall live. For have I any pleasure at all that the wicked shall die, saith the Lord God? and not that he should turn from his ways, and live?* Ezek. 18. 21, 22, 23.

This is the great Doctrine of the *Gospel*, which is a *Covenant of remission of sins*, upon *Repentance*. Repentance is its *great Article* and *fundamental Truth*, and is therefore called by St. *Paul* the *Foundation of Repentance*, Heb. 6. 1. For that which was taught to all the World, in all the *degrees* of Publication of the *Gospel*, was that *now God called all men to repent*, and *that he would forgive them all their sins upon their true repentance.*

St. *John* the *Baptist*, who was Christ's Herald and Fore-runner, at his entrance upon that work, begins with it. *John*, says St. *Luke*, *in all the Country about* For-

Jordan, came preaching the Baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, Luke 3. 3.

Our Lord and Saviour *Christ* himself, when he comes after to proclaim his own Gospel, goes on with it. *Jesus began to preach*, says St. *Matthew*, *and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*, Matt. 4. 17.

And when he left the World, the Commission which he gives to his *Apostles*, is to proceed on still in the Promulgation of it to all the *World*, as he had done to the people of the *Jews*. For at the last time of his being with them, just before his *Ascension* into Heaven, when, as St. *Matthew (b)* tells us, he commissioned them to *preach to all mankind*; those *instructions* which he gave to them, St. *Luke* informs us were, that *repentance and remission of sins should be preached to all Nations in his Name, beginning at Jerusalem*, Luke 24. 47. This was the chief thing which they had in *Commission*, and the summ and substance of their *Embassy*. For that *Ministry* which was *committed to them*, was a Ministry of reconciling God and Men by this means, as St. *Paul* says, or a *Ministry of Reconciliation*, so that *they were Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech men by them*, and they as Christ's Deputies, who is the prime Mediator, did *pray them in his stead to be reconciled to God*, 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20.

(b) Matt. 28. 19.

And when the *Apostles* came to *execute their Orders*, the publishing of this was all their *care* and *practice*. For they all of them, went about preaching in *all places*, and to *all persons*, *repentance* for the *remission of sins*.

St. *Peter* in his first Sermon thus exhorts the people; *Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins*, Acts 2. 38. and so again *Acts* 3. *Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out*, v. 19. And the same he proclaims more *generally* in his second Epistle, assuring all Christians, that the *Lord is not willing that any man should perish, but that all should come to repentance*, which is sure to prevent it, 2 *Pet.* 3. 9.

St. *Paul* preaches to the *Athenians*, that *now God had commanded all men every where to repent*, Acts 17. 30.

And St. *John* assures us, that by virtue of that Gospel-Covenant, which was confirmed with us in Christ's Blood, if with repenting hearts *we confess our sins, he is faithful* to his word, *and just* to his promise, *to forgive us our sins, and*

and to cleanse us from the guilt and stain of *all unrighteousness* of one sort or other, 1 *John* 1. 9.

I should recite almost the whole *New Testament*, if I were to repeat all that the *Scriptures* affirm in this point. But by what I have already offered, I take it to be clear beyond all doubt and scruple, that the *Gospel-Covenant* is a * *Covenant of remission of sins upon repentance.* God *most earnestly desires that we should repent*, and *he is most truly and faithfully willing to forgive us all our former sins upon our true repentance.* Nay I might add, he is not only *willing*, but extreamly *joyful* and *glad of the occasion.* For it is his highest pleasure to go out and meet a *returning Soul*; and the joy of his heart, to embrace a reclaimed *Penitent*, as our Saviour has most clearly intimated to us in the most *welcome reception* of the *returning Prodigal*, Luke 15. 11, 12, &c. *There is* a general *joy* in the Heavenly Court, says our Saviour again, and *in the presence of all the Angels of God*, even *over any one sinner that repenteth*, Luke 15. 10. nay, *there is more joy over one penitent, than* there is *over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance*, v. 7.

* This is that Grace, which Christ's Blood procured for us —— αἷμα αὐτῦ ὅτι διὰ τὴν ὑμετέραν σωτηρίαν ἐγχυθὲν, πάντι τῷ κόσμῳ μετανοίας χάριν ὑπήνεγκεν. Clem. Rom. 1. Ep. ad Cor. c. 7. And that which ensued upon his exaltation —— *Exalted to give repentance and remission of sins*, Acts 5. 31.

Thus had God provided us of a *means*, *which will most certainly restore us to his favour.* He has not left us in our forlorn state, but has prescribed us this method of repentance to recover us out of it, and to be the great Instrument of our Pardon and Reconciliation.

And this remedy, is *adequate* to all our needs, and able to regain all that, which our sins at any time have made us lose. For it will repair the breach upon all sorts of offences, whether they be our *known* or *unknown*, our *voluntary* or *involuntary* sins. Of all which I shall now proceed to speak particularly.

This remedy of repentance, I say, God has fitted for all sorts of transgressions; whether they be,

1. Our *known*, or
2. Our *unknown* and *secret* sins.

1. Our *unknown* and *secret* sins have the benefit of this remedy, and that whereupon God will pardon them

them, is a *general repentance*, and a *general Prayer for forgiveness*.

As for several both of our *voluntary* and *involuntary* sins they are *secret* and *concealed* from us, and quite without our *knowledge* and *remembrance*. We are wholly ignorant and in the dark about them, and our Consciences have no more sense of them, than they have of those which we were never guilty of. For as for our *involuntary sins*, in *some* of them we are wholly *ignorant*, and never think them sinful; and in *others* we are *inconsiderate*, and do not many times observe that we sin in them. And as for our *voluntary* and *wilful* sins, though we know full well, and observe when we at first commit them; yet doth our knowledge of them, as of other things, slip out of our minds by degrees, and through length of time, and throng of other thoughts, at last we quite *forget* them.

And these sins being thus *quite out of our thoughts*, and wholly *secret* and *unknown* to us; we cannot *particularly* either *beg pardon for them*, or *repent of them*.

We cannot, I say, *particularly beg pardon for them*. For no man can become a Suiter in behalf of he knows not whom, nor recommend any thing to God's Mercy before he has discovered it himself. And since these particular sins are secret and unknown, they cannot be the matter of a particular prayer and recommendation.

Nor can we *particularly repent* of them. As for our *wilful* sins indeed, whether we *remember* them or have *forgot* them, the case is the same as to *one prime part* of a particular *repentance*, viz. *our forsaking of them*, and *beginning to obey that particular known Law which he had wilfully sinned against*. We must retract *every* voluntary sin by a voluntary obedience, and without this we can have no just hopes of pardon. For there is no promise of salvation to any man, but upon a *particular obedience to all known Laws*, so that when since he sees and understands a Duty, he must obey it particularly before he can expect to live by it. But now as for *those Laws*, which are transgressed by our *wilful* sins, they are all *known*, since we could not will and chuse to disobey them, unless we saw and knew our selves to be found by them. So that, whether we had sinned against them

for-

formerly, or no; whether we remember it, or have forgot it; obedience to them is our present Duty, and a Duty too so necessary, that without it we cannot reasonably hope to be saved. If therefore we have sinned against any such known Law, we must amend it, and leave off wilfully to repeat the sin; for our obedience to all them is necessary to our pardon, and whether we remember or have forgot that we transgressed them *formerly*, as to the present it is all one, for we must chuse to obey them now.

But as for other acts of a particular repentance, *viz. confession, sorrow, detestation*, and the like; there is no place for them about any of our *secret sins*, whether they be *voluntary* or *involuntary*: For no man can *confess what he is ignorant of*, nor *grieve when he understands not why*, nor *hate* and *detest he knows not what*; so that he must particularly know his sins before he can be thus particular in his repentance of them.

A *particular prayer* and *repentance* then, have no place about our *unknown* sins; they are not capable to be exercised about them, and therefore they cannot be exacted for the pardon of them.

But that *prayer* and *repentance* whereof they are *capable*, and whereupon God will graciously *forgive* them, is *indefinite* and *general*. These may very well be used about them. For we may all understand thus much by our selves, that we are all Sinners, and are guilty of much more than we know and can remember. Several sins slipt from us at first, without our knowledge and observation, and several others, which were at first observed, were afterwards forgotten. And when we know this general number, altho' we are not able to recover any particular instance, we may very well be sorry for it, and beg God to forgive it; and so expiate them, as much as may be, by a *general prayer* and *repentance*.

And this remedy God has assigned for our *unknown sins*, and when we make use of it he will forgive them. Holy *David* was very sensible, that he laboured under many such *secret faults*, and by this means of a *general penitential prayer*, he endeavours to procure their *pardon*. *Who*, says he, *can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from my secret faults*, Psal. 19. 12. And because such sins are daily slipping from us, that our remedy might

might be as near as our diſeaſe, our Lord has put into our daily prayers this general petition for our expiation, *Forgive us our treſpaſſes*, Matt. 6. 12.

As for this ſort then, our *unknown* and *ſecret* ſins, a *general prayer* and *repentance* is their remedy. If we obey all known Laws, and particularly repent of all our known tranſgreſſions; our ſecret and unknown ſins need not lie heavy on us. For if we are honeſtly ignorant of them, and uſe due pains and ingenuity about them; if we neither over-look them through ſloth and negligence, nor miſtake them through partiality and wilfulneſs; a general and penitential prayer ſhall ſerve their turn, and reſtore us unto mercy and reconciliation.

And then,

2. As for all our *known* ſins, God has not been wanting to us in them neither, but has moſt graciouſly provided us of a remedy, and means of reconciliation for them, of what *nature* or *degree* ſoever they be. Whether,

1. Our *voluntary* and *wilful*; or,

2. Our *involuntary* ſins.

1. In the Goſpel God has provided us of a remedy, to reſtore us again to his favour, when once we have loſt it through our *voluntary*, and *wilful* ſins; and that remedy is a *particular repentance* of them.

To the pardon of theſe, it is neceſſary that we *particularly amend* and *forſake* them. For they interrupt a ſtate of love and good agreement, and ſet God and us at enmity and defiance. So long as they are continued in, they keep God and Men at a diſtance, they interpoſe betwixt us and his mercy, and hinder all the ſigns of his approbation, and all the expreſſions of his pardoning Grace from iſſuing out upon us. To reſtore us therefore to God's Grace and Acceptance, theſe voluntary ſins muſt be taken out of the way; and by a voluntary amendment and reformation, we muſt undo all that was done amiſs in our wilful tranſgreſſion. And of theſe ſins all thoſe places are meant, that make *repentance*, which, as we ſaw above, includes in it *amendment*, the indiſpenſible condition of life and pardon. As when *repentance and remiſſion* of ſins, is commanded *to be preached to all Nations*, Luke 24. 47. and men are bid to *repent*, that *their ſins may be blotted out*, Acts 3. 19. or, as it is in the peremptory

emptory and severe words of our Saviour, to *repent or else they shall all perish*, Luke 13. 3.

And as this particular repentance and reformation is *necessary* to the pardon of our wilful sins, so is it most certainly *available* and *sufficient* for them. Although they are of a most heinous guilt, and provoking Nature; yet is not their offence unpardonable, or their case desperate. For after a man has put himself out of a state of Grace and God's Favour by them, he is not quite cast off, nor need to despair of getting in again. He is not presently upon every such offence, banish'd the King's Court and Presence for ever: but upon his particular repentance and reformation, he will be allowed to recover his former station. For the preaching of the *Prophets*, of the *Baptist*, of our Saviour *Christ*, and of his *Apostles*, was to call all the *wilful* and *lost Sinners*, both of the *Jewish* and *Gentile* World, to this reconciliation; Christ, as himself informs us, *coming to* (d) *save that which was lost*, and to (e) *call all Sinners* of one sort or another *to repentance*. Mens very *Baptism* or entrance into Christianity, is a cleansing of them from the guilt of *all former sins without exception*. *Repent, and be baptized every one*, says St. *Peter, for the remission of sins*, Acts 2. 38. and *be baptized*, says *Ananias* unto *Saul, and wash away all thy sins*, Act. 22. 16.

(d) Matt. 18. 11.
(e) Matt. 9. 13.

Nay, after men are once *baptized*, and have all their former wilful sins washt off in that *water of regeneration*; yet is *not every wilful sin, which they are guilty of thenceforward irrecoverably damnable*; but *they are still called to accept of mercy and forgiveness upon repentance*, as before, and *Offenders* are under the Grace of repentance, as well as others. For that repentance, whereto we are called by Christ's Gospel, is not so much an *act*, as a *state*: which St. *Paul* intimates, when he talks of *renewing men unto repentance*, that is, unto the condition and standing Terms of it, *Heb.* 6. 4, 6. It is of God's Grace that there is any forgiveness, and, in order thereunto, any place for repentance at all; and of the same Grace, we have received a promise of forgiveness upon repentance for *all sins*, and at *all times* whatsoever. *If any man* among us baptized Christians, *sin*, says St. *John*, his case is in no wise desperate, for *we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the*

the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins, as well as *for the sins of the whole* unchristened *world*, 1 John 2. 1, 2.

And therefore the way of dealing with wilfully offending Christians, is not to fix them in their Impenitence by despair of recovering themselves; but to call them by repentance to mercy and forgiveness. For (*f*) Rev. 2. 16. 21. the Spirit of God himself writes to the (f) *back-sliding Church of Ephesus, to remember from whence they were fallen, and to repent and do their first works*, Rev. 2. 5. And St. *Paul* finds fault with the *Christians* at *Corinth*, for *not repenting of their uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness which they had* wilfully *committed*; threatning *to bewail them*, or to excommunicate them in sorrow and lamentation, according to the custom of those times, if they did it not, 2 *Cor.* 12. 21. Nay, in the case of the *incestuous* Criminal, who had committed such a fault, as was not *so much as named*, and much less done *among the unbaptized Heathens* themselves; he doth not consign him up to *eternal Torments*, but endeavours, by the rod of Discipline and *Church-censures*, to reduce him to *repentance, that his spirit might be saved in the* judgment-*day of the Lord Jesus*, 1 Cor. 5. 1, 5. And as for the other Members of the *Church of Corinth*, who were unconcerned and *puffed up* at such an enormous accident; he reproves them smartly, that by bringing them to a sense of their sin, he may work them into a reformation, *v.* 1, 2. Which good effects, when he understood that his reproof had wrought upon them, he rejoyces mightily, and glories in it in his next *Letter*, *I rejoyce*, says he, that by my *former Letter you were made sorry*, seeing it was *after a godly manner*, and *you sorrowed to repentance*: For such *godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation*, which is *not to be repented of*, 2 Cor. 7. 8, 9, 10.

And as he practised thus with *baptized wilful offenders* himself, so doth he instruct *Timothy*, that he should do likewise. For he tells him, that the way whereby the man of God ought to deal with sinners, even those of the worst sort, who are not only *subject*, but *enslaved* to sin, is not peremptorily to damn, and seal them up fast unto destruction: but in great meekness to endeavour to reclaim them, that by recovering them

them to *Repentance*, he may restore them again to Life, and Pardon. *The Man of God*, says he, *must in meekness instruct* even the Refractary and Contumacious, or *those that oppose themselves* against him, *if God peradventure will give them Repentance, to the acknowledgment of the Truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the Devil, who are taken captive by him at his will*, 2 Tim. 2. 25, 26.

And to name no more Instances of this Nature, but to sum up all in one, even those great and *scandalous wilful Sinners*, whose Offences make it fit and needful to *expel them the Society of Christians*, are not yet in their very *Excommunication* shut up irrecoverably under the Pains of Hell, but, quite contrary, 'tis intended by this very means to reduce them to *repentance*, and thereby to *Pardon* and *Acceptance*; *Excommunication* it self being, as S. *Paul* says, *for the destruction of the flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus*, 1 Cor. 5. 5. And the *Power of the Keys* in *remitting* or *retaining Sins*, that is, in the Excommunicating or Absolving of Offenders, is intrusted with the Ministers of Christ's Church, *for* the *Edification* of the Excommunicated Sinners themselves, *and not for* their *Destruction*, 2 Cor. 10. 8. and chap. 13. 10.

And by all this we see, that the *Grace of Christ's Gospel* is a *Grace of Repentance and Remission of Sins*, all the way, both *before Baptism*, and also *after* it. In all Periods, from the Beginning to the End, it is an Instrument of Pardon and a Means of Peace; or a *Word* and *Ministry*, as S. *Paul* says, *of Reconciliation*, 2 Cor. 5. 19. If we break our *Baptismal Vows*, which are the Condition of the Covenant, *once*, and thereby forfeit all our Right to Happiness; it gives us Liberty to *repeat* them. For we have the Freedom, both in our *private* and our *publick Prayers*, to renew all our good Resolutions, and to make God new Promises, and to undertake for the Performance of that wherein we have wilfully failed, by new Engagements. Nay, it doth not only allow, that we *may* thus renew the *Covenant*; but it requires that we *should*: It *has appointed an Ordinance*, the *Eucharist* or *Lord's Supper* I mean, *for this very purpose*. For the Bread and Wine which we eat and drink there, our Saviour tells us is a *Federal Form*, and the *New Covenant*;

or, according to the manner of the *Eastern* Nations, who ratified their Covenant by eating and drinking together, the *re-entring* or *confirming of that Covenant, which was at first sealed* and *confirmed in his Blood. This*, says he, *is the new Testament* or * Covenant *in my Blood, drink ye all of it*, and so according to the known Rite, confirm this Covenant with God by it, *Luke* 22. 10. *Mat.* 22. 27. And this he has not only *allowed* but *injoyned* to all his Disciples —— *Do this*, says he, *in remembrance of me*. And that not only at *one Time*, as it is with Baptism, but at *all Times* during your whole Lives; for in this manner of a Federal *Eating* and *Drinking of this Bread and Wine, you must shew forth the Lord's Death always*, even *till he come* again the second Time, *i. e.* unto the World's End, 1 *Cor.* 11. 24, 25, 26.

* Διαθήκη.

Forgiveness of Sins then *upon Repentance*, is a *Grace which is begun in Baptism, and which is ever after continued, being repeated in every Prayer, and sealed in every Sacrament, to the end of our Lives.* So that no wilful Sin can damn us, if we repent of it; but the damned accursed Sinner, is only he who lives and dies *impenitent*. Insomuch as that very Sin, for which S. *Paul* says there is no Benefit from Christ's Death, nor any Help of Sacrifice under the Gospel; is therefore excluded from all *Grace of Pardon*, because it is from all *possibility of Repentance*. For therein it is, that the *irrecoverableness* of those lost Sinners consists —— *It is impossible*, says he, *to renew them to Repentance*, Heb. 6. 6.

Thus then, we see, that Christ's Gospel has afforded us a Remedy even for our wilful Sins, whether they be committed *before Baptism*, or *after* it, at one Time or at another, at all without exception; so that although sometimes we do fall under them, yet we shall not be eternally condemned for them. Let us but repent particularly therefore and amend it, and whatever Sin we have wilfully been guilty of, our Work is done. For our Repentance shall set us straight, and our Reformation will make us innocent; and if we are careful to do so no more, our offence will be looked upon as if it never had been done at all.

But against this *pardonableness of our wilful Sins, after our Belief of the Gospel*, and *Baptism into the Christian Faith*;

Faith; some perhaps may be ready to object *two Places* from St. *Paul*'s Epistle to the *Hebrews*, wherein he may seem to teach us a more *rigorous* and *severe Lesson.*

In the 10th *Chapter*, he lays down this as a great Truth: *If we sin wilfully after that we have received the Knowledge*, or open Belief and (*g*) Acknowledgment *of the Truth* of Christ's Gospel, *there remains no more* Benefit to us from Christ's *sacrifice for sins*; *but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall consume the Adversaries*, v. 26, 27. (g) ἐπίγνωσιν.

And in the 6th *Chapter*, to the eternal Terror of all *wilful Back-sliders*, he speaks thus to the same purpose: *It is impossible for those, who were once enlightned, and have tasted of the heavenly Gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God*; *if after all this they shall fall away*, to be again recovered, or for any of us *to renew them to Repentance*; *seeing they crucifie to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame*, v. 4, 5, 6.

But now, if our *wilful Sins after Baptism*, and Belief of the Gospel, be thus *desperate*, and utterly excluded from all Hopes of Cure and Benefit of Expiation by Christ's Sacrifice, as the Apostle in these Places seems to intimate; How can the Gospel be truly called a *Ministration of Reconciliation*, *Grace*, and *Pardon*, towards all sorts of *wilful Sins*?

To take off all this Difficulty, I will answer to the Places severally, that all those good Minds, which are wont to be perplexed by them, may be more perfectly relieved by a *particular* and *distinct* understanding of them.

First then, to begin with that, the Word's of St. *Paul*, in the 10th Chapter of his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, are these. *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering*; *Not forsaking the assembling of our selves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another* to the open owning and frequenting of them; *and* this we ought to do *so much the more*, forasmuch *as ye see the day* of God's righteous Judgment *approaching. For if we sin wilfully* in this Backsliding from the publick Assemblies, and from the Profession of the Christian Faith, *after that we have* once *receiv'd the Knowledge*, or professed Belief and (*h*) Acknowledgment *of the truth* of it, *there remains no more* Benefit to us from Verse 23, 25. 26. (h) ἐπίγνωσιν

verse 27. from Christ's *Sacrifice for Sins, but a certain fearful looking for of* that *judgment*, I say, *which shall devour the Adversaries*? And this all you *Hebrews* have reason to expect from *Christ*, from what you very well know of the manner of proceeding in such Cases under *Moses*.

v. 28. For *he that despised* or rejected the whole, yea or even any one particular Instance of *Moses*'s *Law*, whereto Death was threatned, *dyed without Mercy*, if the thing was proved against him *under* the Testimony of *two or three witnesses*. And then *of how much sorer Punishment,*

v. 29. *suppose ye, shall* this wilful Sinner *be thought worthy who hath*, by such wilful rejecting of all Christ's Laws and Religion, *trodden under Foot the Son of God*, as if he were not raised up again from the Dead, but were yet in his Grave; *and hath accounted* that *Blood* of his, which confirmed the New *Covenant*, and *wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing*, making it to have been justly shed, as the Blood of a Malefactor; *and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace* and all its Evidence, by rejecting it as insufficient? I have set down the Place at large, that the very *Text* it self may afford us an accumulated Proof of the ensuing Explication.

But now as for this Sin, which, being wilfully committed after the Belief and Acknowledgment of Christ's Gospel, is here said to have no help from Christ's Sacrifice, nor any benefit of his Propitiation, It is *not the sinful Transgression of every Law of Christ, no nor of any one*; but a *total Apostasie and Abrenunciation of them all.*

This Sin, I say, which being *wilfully committed* after the Belief of Christ's Gospel, is here said to exclude us from all Benefit of Christ's Sacrifice, is *not the Transgression of any of Christ's Laws whatsoever, nay nor of any one.* For the *Corinthians* were guilty of the *wilful* Transgression of several Laws, and that too after they had embraced the *Faith of Christ*. They were guilty of an indulged *Lasciviousness*, *Uncleanness*, and *Fornication*, 2 Cor. 12. 21. Nay one of them was guilty of it in such an instance, as was *not so much as named*, and much less practised *among the Gentiles* themselves; *viz.* in a most incestuous marrying of his Step-mother, or *his Father's Wife*, 1 Cor. 5. 1. And S. *Peter*, a great Apostle, after three Years Converse with his Lord and Master, *denies him three times*, and that not suddenly

e're

e're he could bethink himself, but after a due space of Time between one denial and another, *Luke* 22. 57, 58, 59. All which he did in the most *aggravated* manner, by accumulating *Perjuries* and *Prophaneness*, upon the Sin of disowning his Master; for when his *bare Word* would not be believed, *he began to curse and to swear that he knew him not*, Mar. 14. 71. All these were sins *wilful* in their Commission, and some of them most *highly criminal* in their Nature; but yet none of them was excluded from the benefit of Christ's Sacrifice, for they all enjoyed it. So that it is not any one Transgression of a particular Law after Men have embraced the Faith of Christ, which is the un-atoned Sin here mentioned.

But it is *an utter rejecting of all the Laws of Christ, and a total Apostasie from his whole Religion.* It is the *renouncing of Christ's Authority, the disowning of his Gospel*, and *falling quite off from him, to Judaism*, or *Paganism*, or *something directly Antichristian*, which is the Sin here intended, and whosoever doth this, not only when surprized by Fear, or wearied out and overpowered by extremity of Torture, as the *Lapsers*, or they who fell in the Primitive Persecutions, to whom God often gave the Grace to repent, and whom the Catholick Church still received again upon their Repentance. But whoso doth it, *wilfully after he has* once *acknowledged Christianity*, and been convinced by it, from him *there remains no more sacrifice for Sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour him*, and all other Antichristian *adversaries*.

That the Word which is here translated (*e*) *Sin*, signifies sometimes not all Sin in *general*, but particularly this *superlative* height and *aggregation* of all Sin, an *utter Revolt from God's Service*, and *Apostasie from his whole Religion*, appears plainly from 2 *Pet.* 2. where the *Apostate Angels* are called *the Angels that* (*k*) *sinned*. v. 4.

And that this *particular* way of Sinning, by an *universal Apostasie*, and *falling quite off from the Profession of the Christian Faith*, is that very Sin which is here intended, may appear to any, who will attend to those things which are spoken of it in this Place, and put them all together.

'Tis plain from the *Apostle's Exhortation against it*—— *Let us hold fast*, says he, *the profession of our faith*, and not revolt from it, *v.* 23.

(*i*) ἁμαρτάντων ἡμῶν.

(*k*) ἀγγέλους ἁμαρτησάντας.

From his *further Dissuasion from it* in the *verse* next but one,—*not forsaking the* Christian *Assemblies*, which is a great Step towards the disowning of Christ himself, *as the manner of some is*, v. 25.

From his *Character of it* in the *Verses* that follow, it being a Sin, which includes in it *all* these Instances of Aggravation.

By it we *become utterly Antichristian*, and *Adversaries to Christ and his Religion*; —*the fiery Indignation* that is kindled by this Sin, *shall devour* all them, who by reason of it are become *Adversaries*, ver. 27.

By it we *deny Christ to be risen*, and *look upon the Son of God as yet in the Grave* and *under our Feet*; we *count his Blood*, which was spilt for the Confirmation of the New Covenant, *to have been the impure* and *unholy Blood of a Malefactor justly executed*; we *despise all the clear Proof* and *convictive Evidence of the Spirit of Grace*, which we once thought a sufficient Argument for his Religion, and whereby we were moved to the Acknowledgment of that Truth of his, which now we contumeliously reject. Whosoever hath committed this Sin, saith the *Apostle*, I will shew you what he hath done; *he hath trodden under Foot the Son of God, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace*, ver. 29.

As for the Sin then which is here spoken of, it is plainly this; *viz. a Sin that is contrary to the holding fast of our Christian Profession*, that *implies a forsaking of the Christian Assemblies*, that *makes us open Enemies and Adversaries to Christ and his Cause*, seeing thereby *we deny Christ to be risen*, and *affirm him to have been an Impostor*, and *his Blood to have been*, like that of the Thieves which were crucified with him, *unholy and impure as the Blood of a Malefactor*, and *set at nought all the miraculous Proofs*, and *despise all the convictive Evidence of the holy Ghost*, that *Spirit of Grace*, which hath proved to us abundantly that that Religion of his, which we now renounce, is a most certain Truth of God. All *these Marks* are evidently attributed to that Sin which the Apostle here speaks of; and then what can any Man think it to be less, than an *absolute Apostasie from the whole Religion*, and an *utter abrenunciation of all the Laws of Christ*?

Now

Now whosoever *wilfully* falls under this, I confess he is in a very deplorable and most desperate Case. Because for him, as saith the Apostle, *there remains no more benefit* from Christ's Propitiation or *Sacrifice for Sin*: He has affronted that so enormously, that God will never suffer him to be the better by it. And this to a *Jew* ought to be no *uncouth* or *surprizing Doctrine*, seeing he who thus renounced *Moses* could have no Sacrifice to atone for him. For no propitiation was allowed for him who *wilfully rejected any one particular Command of Moses*, but least of all if he had *apostatized from the whole Law*. *He that despised* even any one particular Threatning Death in *Moses's Law*, *died without mercy under two or three Witnesses*. But now this *Covenant* and *Law of Moses* was sealed only in the *Blood of Bulls and Goats*; whereas this *Covenant* and *Law of Christ*, which these Men renounce that I am speaking of, was confirmed in his *own Blood*: *Moses* the Author of that Law, was but a *Servant*; whereas *Christ*, the Author of this, was a *Son*. If then the revolting from *Moses* was so unpardonable, that it inevitably incurred Death, and put a Man out of all Hopes of Propitiation and Benefit of Sacrifice; *of how much sorer Punishment*, as he most rationally argues, must all Apostates from Christ *be accounted worthy*, who by their falling away from his Religion, *tread under Foot the Son of God himself*, a Person infinitely above *Moses*; *and count the Blood*, not of Bulls and Goats, but of the Christ of God, wherewith this *Covenant* was sealed, to be *an unholy thing*? They are indeed irrevocably plunged in Death, and their apostatizing or *drawing back* from that Religion, which upon so good Evidence they had before acknowledged, is to their own *Ruin* and *Destruction*, ver. 38.

But although this *total Apostacy* and *abrenunciation of Christianity* it self, when 'tis *wilfully Committed*, be so remediless and desperate a Sin; yet is that nothing to the Breach of *any particular Law*, or to the *wilful Transgressions of any baptized Man, so long as he still continues Christian*. For all his Sins of one sort or other, have the Salvo of Repentance provided for them: And if he doth but once *reform* and *amend* them, he shall not be condemned for them.

And thus having shewed, that this Place in the tenth Chapter to the *Hebrews*, makes nothing against the pardonableness of any *Christian* Man's Sin upon Repentance, but only against the Forgiveness of those who have *apostatized from Christ*, and become *unchristian*; I proceed now,

2. To consider that other Place in the sixth Chapter of the same *Epistle*, where the *Apostle's* Words are these:

Verse 1. *Therefore leaving the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ*, wherein we are wont to catechize even Children and Novices; *let us go on unto Perfection*, and to treat of such things as are fit for grown Men: *not laying again*, for such as are apostatized from it, *the* first *Foundations* of the Christian Doctrine, as are the Doctrine *of repen-*

2. *tance from dead works, and of Faith towards God; of the Doctrine of Baptisms, and of laying on of Hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal Judgment.*

3. *And this will we do if God permit*, without returning, as I say, to prove again the Foundations of the Faith to them who are fallen from it; which indeed were a

4. very vain and fruitless Undertaking. *For it is impossible,*

(*l*) φωτισθέντες. *for those who were once enlightned* or (*l*) baptized, *and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made Partakers*

5. *of the Holy Ghost; and have tasted of the good word of God, and of the Powers of Christ'* Kingdom, or *the*

6. *World to come; if* after this *they shall* wilfully *fall away* from this Faith, it is impossible for them, I say, to be recovered, or for us by any Endeavours of ours *to renew them again unto* the Grace and Covenant of *repentance*; because God is irreconcilably provoked by this Revolt, *seeing* thereby *they crucifie to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him* once again *to an open shame.*

Here indeed the Case is as desperate as it was before; and 'tis no wonder why it should, because the Sin is the very *same.* For it is nothing less than an *universal backsliding*, and *apostasie both in faith and manners*, a *renouncing of all the Religion* and *Laws of Christ*, whereof all these severe things are spoken.

(*m*) παραπτώσας. As for the Word (*m*) which is here put to note this *falling away*, it signifies for the most part a *fall which admits of a rise again*, and is recoverable; but sometimes it denotes a *fall that is desperate*, and *beyond all hopes of remedy.* Thus the Apostle, speaking of the *incredulous*

Jews,

Jews, to whom the Religion of Christ was a *ſtumbling-block* and a *rock of offence*, diſtinguiſhes betwixt theſe *two*, * *ſtumbling*, and *falling*; making the *latter* to be much more dangerous than the *former*, and denying *it* of them, when he affirms the *other*. *Have they ſtumbled*, ſays he, *that they ſhould* † *fall* mortally and irrecoverably? *God forbid*, Rom. 11. 11.

* πταίσωσι. and πέπτωσι. † ἵνα πέσωσι.

And thus it ſignifies in *this* place. For the *falling away* here ſpoken of, is nothing leſs than a *revolting from all Chriſt's Laws and Doctrine*, and an *apoſtatizing from his whole Religion*. Which appears from ſeveral things that are here ſaid of it, ſome whereof *they are ſaid to fall from*, and others of them *are ſaid to be implied in their falling*.

It appears, I ſay from ſome things, *which they are ſaid to apoſtatize or fall from*.

They fall away *from their Baptiſm* which is expreſſed by the word **enlightned*, the common name in the *ancient Church* to ſignifie the baptized; from *the remiſſion of Sins*, the *preaching of the Word*, and the *adminiſtration of the Sacraments*, which are ſuch *privileges* and *gifts of God*, as are offered to perſons baptized; from the *hopes of Heaven*, and all the *promiſes* and *good word of God*; from the *gift of tongues*, and *other effects of the Holy Ghoſt*, whereof, upon the *impoſition of the Apoſtles hands*, they had been made *Partakers*; and from the *power of working miracles*, that were ſo conſpicuous under the appearance of Chriſt, thoſe times of *Meſſiah*, which the *Jews* were wont to call the *Age* or *world to come*; *if thoſe*, ſays the Apoſtle, *who were once* baptized or *enlightned*, *and have taſted of the heavenly gift*, *and were made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt*, *and have taſted of the good word* or promiſe *of God*, *and the powers of the world to come*; *if they ſhall fall away*, or apoſtatize from all theſe, *it is impoſſible to renew them*, v. 4, 5, 6. This, as is evident, is the *Apoſtaſie* which is here ſpecified, which is nothing leſs, than a *renouncing of the Baptiſmal Covenant*, of *the preaching of the Word*, of *the adminiſtration of the Sacraments*, of *all the Goſpel-promiſes*, nay *of all thoſe miraculous gifts and powers of the Holy Ghoſt*, *whereof in the firſt times they were ordinarily made partakers*; and what can any man take this to be, but an *utter renouncing of the whole Goſpel* and *Religion of Chriſt*?

* φωτισθέντες. See *Heb.* 6. 4.

And

And that it is so, is still further manifest from *those things, which are said to be implied in their falling.*

For hereby they are said, *to condemn Christ as an Impostor,* to *justifie his murderers,* to *say he was crucified justly,* and *that were he now alive, they should be ready to crucifie him over again,* which is a *publishing again to all the world his reproach,* and a *putting him anew to an open shame.* By *this falling away,* saith the Apostle, *they crucifie to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame,* v. 6.

But now, thus to *renounce our Baptism,* and *all our Christian Privileges,* to *Condemn Christ as a Cheat and Impostor,* to *justifie his Murderers,* and to *defame his Religion;* what is it less, than a *renouncing of his Gospel,* and a *falling off to persecute the Christian Faith and Profession?*

And as for the wilful doing of this indeed, the Apostle says expressly that it is desperate, and that *it is impossible for him,* by any endeavours or arguings which he can use, *to renew again* those who are guilty of it, to that Gospel Covenant which they thus abjure, and which is the only gracious means of repentance and reconciliation. And since it is to no purpose, says he, I will not attempt it, but *go on* in speaking to those who still retain the Faith, without concerning my self to *prove again the foundation* to those who have apostatized from it, ver. 1, 3.

These wilful Apostates therefore are in a most deplorable case, for they have sinned themselves out of all capacity of mercy, and transgressed beyond all recovery. For there is no pardon to any wilful sinner whatsoever, unless he repent; nor can there be any to Apostates, unless they can repent of their Apostacy, and be converted over to Christianity. But as for those Apostates, *it is impossible for any man to renew them again unto repentance.*

Their *renewal,* I say, *is impossible.* For as for all humane means, which any men, even the *Apostles* of our Lord themselves, could use for their recovery; they have defeated them already. They know all the *evidence of Miracles,* and the *demonstrations of the Spirit*; nay, they have not only *seen* them, but they themselves have been *partakers of them,* and *impower'd to work them:*

but

but yet after all, they have renounced that belief which all these perswade to, they are Armour of proof against all these demonstrations of the *Holy Ghost*, and *Infidels to Christ*, notwithstanding them. So that let an Apostle himself urge any thing to them in behalf of Christ's Religion, his Argument has been overcome before he offers it. He tells them nothing new, nor shews them any thing but what they have seen, nay, what they themselves were formerly impower'd to shew to others; but all that was not strong enough to keep them in the Faith, for when they saw it all, they turned *Infidels* and *Apostates* still.

As for any *humane means* then, they are not like to reclaim them, or to bring them anew to the acknowledgment of the Gospel, which is the only gracious Ministry of Repentance and Reconciliation. So that if ever they be restored again, it must be by a *Divine Power*; for nothing now can possibly prevail with them, but a *special Providence* and a *special Grace*.

But now here is the *desperateness of their state, these will never be afforded them.* For when men have wilfully sinned up to this height, and fallen off against so great means, and so clear conviction; God in the ordinary methods of his Grace, is resolved to concern himself no further with them, nor to trouble himself any more for their recovery. They have had all the care and cultivation of his Grace, which they are like to have; and now, like *barren ground* (which after all that has been laid out upon it, brings forth nothing but *thorns* and *bryers*, that are not only *useless*, but *prickling* and *offensive*) they are *nigh unto cursing*. And this is the very instance which the *Apostle* himself uses, and the reason which he gives of that *impossibility*, which he had affirmed to be in that undertaking. *It is impossible*, says he, for any man to *renew them*, because God will no longer help on his endeavours with his Grace, nor look any further after them. For with those men who are Infidels after all his care, he will deal just as he doth with ground whose fruit is evil and offensive after all his labour; and as for his dealing with that 'tis plainly this. *That Earth*, indeed, *which drinketh up the Rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it was dressed, receiveth more* blessing still *from God*. *But that, which* after it has been

thus

thus water'd *bears thorns and bryars, is rejected and nigh unto curſing, whoſe end is,* not to be water'd any more, but *burnt up,* v. 7, 8.

As for theſe *two* places of the Apoſtle therefore in his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews,* we ſee indeed that they ſpeak of *wilful ſin, beyond pardon,* and of tranſgreſſions which are irremiſſible; but theſe ſins are not the wilful tranſgreſſions of any *Chriſtian man,* but a *wilful Apoſtaſie from Chriſtianity it ſelf.* So that after all, it is true ſtill, that every man, who owns the Religion, and profeſſes the Faith of Chriſt, is provided of a remedy of all his wilful ſins, whenſoever they are committed; for let him but particularly repent of them and amend them, and he never ſhall be condemned for them.

Nay, ſo faſt is the tye, and ſo inſeparable is the connexion under the Goſpel of Chriſt, betwixt *Repentance* and *Remiſſion*; that, as I obſerved, this irremiſſible ſin of *wilful Apoſtaſie* it ſelf, is therefore alone declared *impoſſible to be forgiven,* becauſe it is *impoſſible to bring men to repent of it,* Heb. 6. 6.

If a man doth but *repent,* then let his ſin be *wilfully committed,* whether *before* or *after Baptiſm,* it matters not; for his repentance ſhall ſet him ſtraight in both, and his offence ſhall be quite forgotten, as if it had never been.

Indeed, if a man goes on in a *conſtant trade of ſin, ſilencing continually his own conſcience,* and *grieving God's holy Spirit,* and *deſpiſing all the means and offers of his Grace*; he may ſin himſelf *beyond his time of mercy,* and ſo his ſins will prove irremiſſible, becauſe he is gone too far ever to repent of them, which is their only remedy and means of pardon. For there is a *ſet period of Grace,* and a certain ſeaſon and ſpace of time, wherein God will ſtill make the offers of his help, and of the guidance of his Spirit, to reclaim and reform men. But if after all, they ſlight all his offers, and reject his aid, and prove utterly incorrigible; he grows weary at laſt, and will trouble himſelf no more about them, but leave them wholly to themſelves. And this God plainly intimates concerning incorrigible *Ephraim,* who was juſt then about to be abandoned, and to be given up to the unmaſterable wickedneſs of his own Heart ———— *How ſhall I give thee up,* ſays he, *O Ephraim? how ſhall I de-*

I deliver thee, O Israel! Hos. 11. 8. And our Saviour says the same over *intractable Jerusalem. O! if thou hadst but known, at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace* with God; *but now* it is too late, for *they are hid from thine eyes,* Luke 19. 42. And in this state, 'tis said, that *Hearing they shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing they shall see, and shall not perceive,* Acts 28. 26. *That they are blinded, and their Eyes are darkned, that they may not see, For God hath given them a spirit of slumber,* Rom. 11. 7, 8, 10. and *delivered them up to a reprobate sense,* Rom. 1. 28. That *they cannot believe,* because * *to them it is not given,* and *because he hath blinded their Eyes, and hardned their Heart, that they should not see with their Eyes, nor understand with their Heart, and be converted, and I should heal them,* Joh. 12. 39, 40. * Mat. 13. 11.

This I confess, is a *state of sin,* which is *desperate* and *irrecoverable*; not for that repentance is no sure means of remission, but because when once men are come thus far, God deserts them, so that they never can repent of them.

But as for *the time when any man is come up to this unpardonable pitch, that only God in Heaven knows.* No man can say, I am beyond my time of repentance, because without a *special Revelation* no man can understand it. And therefore let a man have sinned never so long, yet cannot that discourage him from repenting, because if he set himself seriously about it, for ought he knows, God will pity him, and afford him his Grace and Spirit, which is never wanting to such as heartily desire it, to aid and strengthen him in his repentance. Nay indeed, if a man be come so far as to bethink himself, and to be apprehensive of his danger, and to be convinced of the destructiveness of his sinful courses; there is no question to be made, but that he will. For the Tide is turned, and the change is begun already; and that is a thing which needed God's Grace, as much as any thing that is yet remaining. For a *career in wickedness,* is like *running down hill*; the great difficulty is to make the *first Stop,* but when once that is done, to return again is much more easie. And therefore if a man has received so much Grace, as makes him break off his evil courses for the present,

and

and ſtand and deliberate with himſelf, whether or no he ſhall proceed therewith; he need not doubt, if he will go on to endeavour as he has begun, but that he ſhall have more, till at laſt he is fully enabled to perfect and compleat it. He has an experimental evidence that his time of Grace is not paſt, he may be ſure God's Grace is ſtill with him, becauſe it helps and works in him. For it is Grace that brings him on to what he is, and if he be but as willing to be aided by it, as it is ready to aſſiſt him, it will not fail to carry him on further. God's Grace will ſtill grow upon him, as his own endeavours do; ſo that if he make good uſe of this, he ſhall have more. For this is laid down by our Lord, as a certain Rule of divine Diſpenſations; *To him that hath*, that is, maketh a right uſe of that Grace which he hath, *ſhall* more *be given* even in *abundance*, Mat. 25. 29.

Whatſoever irreconcilableneſs therefore there may be, and truly is in ſome ſtates of ſin, when men have gone on beyond their time of Grace; yet he who has ſo much Grace, as to doubt and queſtion, to fear and ſcruple, has great reaſon to think, that as for his part, he is not paſt Grace, but under it. For an *irrecoverable* ſinner, is commonly one that is *hardned*; he tranſgreſſes without ſenſe, and goes on without fear; he is infatuated with his luſts, and lull'd aſleep in his ſin, and ſcarce ever comes to himſelf till he awakes in Damnation. But if once he begins, eſpecially in the time of *health*; either through a *ſevere reproof*, or a *ſevere providence*, to *interrupt his ſin for the preſent*, and to *apprehend the evil of it*; and if from thence he goes on, to *good deſires*, and *holy purpoſes of well-doing*: then he feels that Grace, which he is afraid he wants; and that good Spirit works in him, which he ſuſpects to have deſerted him. He is not in this irrecoverable ſtate, but is going on towards a good recovery.

Indeed, if his *Conſcience is awakned in the height of horror*, and *extremity of deſpair*, ſo that he is *obſtinate againſt all good advice*, and *dead to Prayer and all holy endeavour*, and *continues to be ſo*; this is not an effect of *Grace*, and a *ſtep towards repentance*: but a *terror of Judgment*, and a *fore-taſte of Hell*. If it deads all *induſtry*, by excluding all *hope*; if he *complain of his eſtate*, without *praying and ſeeking to get out of it*; and *deſpair*, *without*

all

all amendment; this *fear of heart and terrour of soul*, 'tis true, doth not bring him nearer unto life and pardon, but by securing him faster in his sin, it shuts him up a closer Prisoner of Condemnation.

But if he be so *apprehensive of his danger*, as to *run from it*; if he has so much *hope*, as will put him upon holy Prayers, and *trying all means*, and *using his best endeavours*; if upon his apprehensions of his present evil state, he fears and desires, and resolves, and strives to get quit of it; he is not deprived of a good Providence or of a gracious Spirit, but enjoys the benefit of them, and is conducted by them. He is in the way to Life, and under the recovering methods of Grace; God's holy Spirit has not for ever abandoned him, but has begun again to work in him.

And thus at last it appears, that as for all the *wilful sins* of any *Christian* man, they are in no wise desperate and helpless; but the Gospel has reached out a remedy for them, to all who are willing to make use of it. For let them but particularly repent of them, and amend them, and then they are safe from them. So long as they continue in the profession of the Christian Faith, and do not apostatize from it, there is no sin whatsoever which they wilfully commit, but is pardonable upon their repentance. If once they honestly undo the fault, and conscientiously forsake it, their work is done; for their penitent reformation shall make them innocent, and whatever punishment the Law may threaten to any sins, when God comes to Judgment, he will not exact it of any man who has been thus reclaimed from them.

Do we find our selves guilty then of any unretracted wilful sins, and thereby subject to a dreadful sentence, according to those measures which have in great largeness been hitherto discoursed of? Let us particularly repent of them, and begin to amend them, and then we are safe from it, and shall most certainly prevent it. Have any voluntary transgressions put us out of a state of favour, and made us obnoxious to the severities of Judgment? Let us reform them, and do so no more, and repair the breach which ensued upon them, and we are surely pardoned. For the Gospel of Christ doth not in any wise intend to amaze and astonish us, or to affright us from amend-

amendment, by putting us into a deſpair of mercy. No, we muſt lay this down as a moſt unerring Rule, That *that can never come from God, which tends to detain us in our ſins, and to diſcourage our reformation.* For the ſumm of all his deſigns and endeavours, both in the *ſending of his Son*, and in the *preaching of the Goſpel*, is to free and cleanſe us from all ſin, and to carry us on to reformation and repentance by the ſure and ſtedfaſt hopes of pardon and acceptance.

Whenſoever we have *wittingly* done evil therefore, let us take care to do ſo no more; and if it were offenſive or injurious to our Brethren, to repair the hurt which our ſin has done, and all is well. And if any Law of the Goſpel threaten us, let us begin thus to fulfil it, and then we are ſafe from it. Let us ſet our ſelves to fulfil it, I ſay, for that only is a ſaving repentance, which, as we ſaw above, implies obedience, and ends in reformation. And if we repent in that manner of any ſin, whatſoever it be, or whenſoever it be committed, whether *before Baptiſm*, or *after* it, it matters not, we ſhall ſurely go unpuniſhed, and ſhall not be eternally condemned for it.

CHAP. II.

Of Reconciliation, and Reſtitution upon thoſe Sins, whereby we have offended, or injured our Brethren.

FROM what has been diſcourſed concerning *the Remedy of wilful ſins* in the *foregoing Chapter*, it plainly appears that they are not *hopeleſs*, but that at what time ſoever any of them have been committed by a *Chriſtian* man, whether *before Baptiſm*, or *after it*, they are ſtill *pardonable* upon his *particular repentance of them.*

This

This Repentance, as has been shewn, implies *amendment*; so that we shall not be judged to have repented of them, till we have *forsaken* them, and are *reformed* from them. Amendment then is necessary to our repentance, and to the pardon of *all* voluntary offences whatsoever; and to the pardon of *some, viz. those wherein God alone is concerned*, it is not only *necessary*, but *sufficient*; but then to a *right repentance*, and to the *pardon* of *others*, which do not barely *offend God*, but are *offensive* also and *injurious to our Brethren*, there is *more* required. For altho' God will forgive his *own* share of any sin, *viz.* so far as it is *an act of disobedience to him*, and account us duly penitent upon our *amendment* and *reformation*; yet will he not judge so favourably, or so easily pass over the hurt which is thereby done to other men. And since in several sins, there is not only an *offence to God*, but withal an *affront* or *injury* to *our Brethren*: whatever God may do in *some*, 'tis plain that he will not pardon *others*, or look upon us to have sufficiently repented of them, upon a *bare forsaking* of the fault, without our seeking also to be *reconciled* to the offended persons, and making of due *reparation*.

And this being a thing, which occasions much *doubt* and *scruple* in many *honest* minds, I will here endeavour to give a plain state of the Duty of *reconciliation upon offences*, and of *restitution upon injuries against our neighbour*, that so we may have no needless fears upon this account, or know how to put an end to them when we have just occasion for them.

In sin there are *three* things considerable, according as it may concern, either *God*, or *men*, or *both*; *viz.* the *offence against God*; and the *offence* and *injury* which it may include *against them*.

First, as for *the offence against God*, as it is *a breach of his Law*, and a *going cross to his pleasure*; it is atoned by *reformation* and *amendment*. Till we are reclaimed indeed from our *former* sins, and are become God's dutiful Sons, and faithful Servants, for the *present*, and resolve to continue so for the *future*; it is not consistent with the *honour of his goodness* and *holiness*, with the *authority of his Laws*, and with the *ends of his Government*, to bear any *complacential love*, or shew any marks of *favour* and *friendly affection* towards us. But as soon as ever we

are conſcientiouſly reformed from them, he will be reconciled to us. He will never puniſh us for any diſobedience againſt his *Divine Majeſty*, after we have forſaken it; but whenſoever we turn off from any evil way, ſo far as he *himſelf was concerned in the diſhoncur of the offence*, he will graciouſly paſs it by, and as may plainly appear from what has hitherto been diſcourſed, return to have mercy upon us.

But then as for the *offence*, and alſo as for the *injury*, which our ſins may at any time imply *towards men*; he will not judge us *ſavingly to have repented of them*, nor *pardon* them upon *amendment* alone, unleſs, together with that we expiate the *firſt* by *ſeeking to be reconciled to the Party, whom we have offended*, and the *latter* by *making amends for the damage done*, and *offering a due reparation*.

Theſe *two* means of pardon, for our ſins of *affront*, or *injury againſt men, viz.* our *ſeeking to be reconciled*, and *making all due reſtitution*, are no leſs *natural fruits* and *neceſſary effects* of *repentance* for *them*, than *reformation* and *amendment* is for *them*, and for *all others*.

For the moſt natural effect of a ſincere and ſufficient repentance, is to *undo the fault*, and *ſet things in the ſame place where they were before*. It implies a *change of mind from ſin*, that now our hearts and thoughts are ſet againſt it: which change is helped on and produced in us, by our *hatred of it*, our *grief* and *ſorrow for it*, and our *being aſhamed of it*. And the natural effect of a change of mind, of *hatred, ſhame*, and *grief*, where they are in any juſt degrees and perfect meaſure, is to *wiſh that the action* which cauſes them *had never been done*, and as much as it is poſſible, *to undo it again*. So that if our repentance for any ſin, is both *true* and *perfect*, if it implies an *undiſſembled hatred*, a *deep ſhame*, and a *great* and *hearty grief* and *ſorrow* for it; it will make us *cancel* and *undo* it, and take away, as far as can be, all the footſteps which it had left behind it.

And becauſe there are *more effects remaining after ſome ſins, than after others*; the *fruits of repentance are more for ſome, than they are for others*. For in *ſome*, only *God* is concerned, as it happens in the *ſins of impiety*, and in *ſeveral inſtances of unſoberneſs*, when there is no *ſcandal* to our Brethren joined with them: And the breach in theſe being only in *God's Authority*, and *Honour*, it is repaired

repaired by our beginning to *own his Laws*, and the ſtain is wiped off by *amendment* and *new obedience*. But in *others*, our *Brethren* are concerned too, as it falls out in all thoſe ſins, whereby we *injure* or *affront men*. And ſince there remains after theſe ſins, not only a *diſhonour of God*, but alſo a *laſting hurt* and *offence to our Neighbour*, the breach made by theſe, is not repaired barely by our beginning to *obey God*, unleſs we alſo ſeek to *appeaſe* and *ſatisfie men*, by our *penitential acknowledgments* and *reſtitution*. And therefore if we are ſo far penitent, as to *retract* and *undo* our ſins, without which we are not duly *aſhamed*, or *ſorry* for them, nor *ſufficiently changed*, and *reclaimed from* them; we ſhall be ready, not only to repair the diſhonour which they caſt upon God, but the injury and offence which they gave to men too.

But in the account of theſe two inſtances of repentance, and means of pardon, to be more particular;

2. In ſin we are to conſider the *offence and juſt diſpleaſure which it gives to our Brethren*, as it manifeſts our *contempt* of them, and our *hoſtile inclination* to inſult over them, or to vex and diſquiet them: And this is to be put away, by our *ſeeking to be reconciled with penitential confeſſions*.

In all ſins againſt *Juſtice* or *Righteouſneſs* towards all men in *general*, or towards any in thoſe *particular Relations* wherein we may be concerned; there is not only an act of *diſobedience towards God*, but alſo of *affront* or *injury againſt our Brethren*: And this, *if they underſtand it*, will beget an *alienation of mind*, and create *hard thoughts* and *hoſtile inclinations*. For when they have obſerved our *contempt* of them, or our *ill will* to them, from our *mockery* and *contumelious uſage*, our *whiſperings* and *backbitings*, our *ſlanderings*, *falſe-witneſs*, *fraud*, *cozenage*, or any other treſpaſs againſt them, whether to their *damage*, or only to their *diſparagement*, or *both*; they will have great reaſon to be *afraid* of us, and *offended* with us. They will think our ſociety unſafe; and either fly our company, or be jealous of us, and ſtand upon their guard when at any time they are ſo unhappy as to be ingaged in it. So that upon theſe ſins, againſt the *Honour*, *Perſons*, and *Eſtates* of our *Brethren*, when once they come to *underſtand* how they are damnified by them, there is not only an act of *diſobedience*

towards God, but alſo a plain *breach* of that *friendſhip*, *good-will*, and *mutual confidence* which ought to be among men.

And now to *undo* all theſe evils which enſue upon theſe ſins, and to ſet things in the ſame ſtate which they held before; there muſt not only be an act of *reformation* and *amendment* to *appeaſe God*, but alſo ſome *outward indications of a change* to the *parties offended*, and ſuch *penitential acknowledgments*, as may *repair the breach which they have made among men*. We muſt let the perſons grieved *know*, that now we are *aſhamed*, and *ſorry* for our *fault*, that our *temper is changed*, and our *mind* is *alter'd*; ſo that they may ſafely venture to *return* again into *favour* with us, and never fear ſuffering the like indignities from us any more. And this now will *reconcile mens minds*, and *reunite their hearts*, and make them to become again *kindly affectionate*, *ſecure*, and *confident*, in the ſociety and converſation of each other. And when this is done, and they have both by reformation and amendment made their peace with God, ſo far as his honour was concerned in it, and alſo by ſuch penitential acknowledgments made their peace with men; they have undone, as much as is poſſible, all that was done amiſs, and ſuch repentance ſhall ſuffice, and prepare them for God's pardon. And this is that, which our Saviour expreſly requires of us, *Matt.* 5. *If thou bring thy gift to the Altar*, ſaith he, *and there*, *before* thou offereſt it, *remembreſt that thy brother*, hath taken juſt offence, and *hath ought againſt thee*, (whether upon account of thy *cauſleſs anger*, in calling him *Fool*, and *Racha*, or uſing any other opprobrious language; or of any other affront, or injury whatſoever;) preſume not to think of appeaſing God before thou haſt appeaſed him, but *leave there thy gift before the Altar*, *and go thy way*, *firſt be reconciled to thy brother*, *and then come and offer thy gift* for thy reconciliation unto God, *v.* 22, 23, 24.

But here we muſt obſerve, that as the neceſſity of ſuperadding theſe *penitential confeſſions* to our *amendment*, ariſes only from the neceſſity of *appeaſing men*, whom our ſins had offended: So whenſoever our treſpaſſes againſt them have given them *no offence*, there is no need of theſe *acknowledgments* for a *reconciliation*. And therefore in all

all our sins against them, whereby we have either injured or disparaged them, which they know not of, there is no need of it at all. For if they understand not that we have wronged or abused them, they cannot be angry at us for so doing; and so there being no breach made by our offence, there is no place for a reconciliation.

Yea, I add further, if they are come to understand our offence, and have accordingly resented it, there is not always still a necessity of having them actually reconciled, but then only *when it can be had*, and *we have an opportunity of doing it.*

There is then only a necessity of having them reconciled, when it can be had. For some men are unalterable in their resentments, and never lay them down; they are eternal in their hatred, and will not forgive an injury to their lives end. And with these, God doth not require that we should actually be reconciled, neither will he be angry at us, when at last we miss of it. He has not made *impossibilities* the *means of pardon*, nor will he make the *unconquerable obstinacy* of one mans sin, to be an article of anothers punishment and condemnation. And therefore when we have to do with such men, we shall be accepted, if we *earnestly seek reconciliation*, although we cannot find it. So that if in this case we *seriously express our sorrow*, and *beg pardon for our faults*, and *promise never after to repeat it*, and, *by our obliging carriage* and *after-kindness, endeavour to atone for our past offence*, and to shew them how safely they may confide in our present engagements: If all this doth not melt them into a compliance, the sinful continuation of the breach is now their own; but as for us, we have done enough to mend what was amiss, and shall deliver our own souls.

And even with those men from whom it might be had, there is then only a necessity of an actual reconcilement, when we have an opportunity of doing it. For in the *infinite mixture of conversation*, and *variety of company* which we meet withal in this world, how commonly are men, especially of an abusive sportful wit, and a proud petulant humour, guilty of these offences towards those persons, whom they shall never see again, and whom they know not where to find, or when; now here, by reason of absence of the persons whom they should make it

to, an actual acknowledgment and reconciliation, is impossible, and all that can be done towards it, is only *sincerely* and *firmly* to resolve to seek it, whensoever an opportunity shall be offer'd. And this *honest purpose of reconciliation*, till such time as we have an opportunity to perform it, shall be as available to our pardon, as if we were indeed reconciled. The *will*, as I have (a) shewn, *shall be taken for the deed*, where *'tis in our power to will only, but not to do*, and where *the deed would certainly follow, if there were but an opportunity to shew it in.* For in this case, the *Apostles* rule is sure; *Where there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not*, 2 Cor. 8. 12.

(a) Book 1. c. 3.

As for the Duty of seeking Reconciliation then, where our sin has given offence to men, it is plainly this: *If they know nothing of our trespass against them*, they are *not angry with us for it*, and so have need of no *atonement.* But if they *do understand it*, and *are offended* at it; we *must seek a reconciliation, if it can be had*, and *where we have an opportunity to endeavour it.* But if there be *no opportunity* of making our acknowledgment at present, we must *firmly purpose* it in our own minds, and *resolve* to make it when a fitting season shall be offer'd: And upon this *honest purpose* which would prove effectual, were the persons present, we shall be pardoned, as if we had performed it.

3. In sin we are to consider the *damage and injury which it implies towards our Neighbour*, as it causes his *unjust loss* or *hindrance*, whether as to his *Life*, his *Liberty*, his *Bed*, his *Good Name*, or his *Estate*; and this is to be expiated *by making amends for the wrong*, and *restoring what our injury took away, by a just and full reparation.*

How often doth mens *Envy* and *Revenge*, their *Covetousness*, and *Ambition*, and unbridled *Lusts*, render them not only *offensive* by *indignities* and *affronts*, but really *hurtful* and *injurious to their Brethren.* They wrong their Bed, by *Adultery*; they *blast their Reputation* by *slanders* and *false reports*; they *spoil them of their Goods*, by theft or oppression, by fraud and couzenage; they *rob them of their lives*, or *liberties*, by *murder* and *false witness*; they *inflame their enemies, estrange their friends*, and *stop* or *destroy their preferment*, be their *malicious*

licious suggestions, unjust suspicions, and *spiteful representations of them.* And when at any time we do thus by our Neighbour, he is really a loser by reason of our sin, and has just reason to complain of us, and stand at a distance from us as dangerous and hurtful persons, till we do not only *confess our fault,* and *seek a reconcilement,* but moreover make him a *just amends,* and set him in the same state, if possibly we can, which he enjoyed before.

This we shall surely do, if we are *truly* and *compleatly penitent;* and till we have thus *restored a spoil,* and *repaired a wrong,* we cannot be thought *truly,* or at least *perfectly* to have *repented* of it.

We cannot *ordinarily* be thought, I say, *to have repented of it truly,* but only *under a* (b) *false disguise* and *vain hypocrisie.* For that is *ordinarily* no *true sorrow,* which doth not *undo the fault,* and set things, as much as may be in the same state which they held before. We shall not be thought to be *really angry at the crime,* if still we hold fast the Bait, *and are pleased with the temptation.* We shall not be esteemed to hate it, so long as we are in love with that which comes by it; for we did not love it for it self at first, but only for the unjust gains sake which led us on to it; and if we yet hold that fast, and will not restore it and let it go, 'tis plain we love it, and adhere to it for its sake still. So long then as men are pleased in the *fruits* of their injustice, and *continue the damage which their brother suffered,* or *hold fast the unlawful gain which they themselves acquired by it;* they cannot in reason be thought to *renounce* or to *redress* it, but to justifie and confirm it. They are resolved to have their end in it, and to enjoy what they sought thereby; and this is not to be punished and afflicted for a fault, but to be enriched by it; it is not repenting of it, but owning and avowing it.

(b) *Si res aliena, propter quam peccatum est, cum reddi possit non redditur, non agitur pœnitentia, sed fingitur.* Aug. ad Macedon. quæ est Ep. 54.

But if the sense of God's wrath, which they have incurr'd by their unjust dealings, should put these men who will not repair them, into some real trouble of mind and grief of heart, as sometimes it doth: yet so long as they make no just amends, but suffer all the ill effects upon their brethren to remain, their Repentance, such as it is, although it be real and sincere, is not yet perfect and en-

tire, and *able to work that reformation which it is deſigned for.* Their mind is changed in part, but 'tis but half way; their ſorrow for their ſin is ſomething, but not enough; it would not have ſtrength ſufficient to prevent the ſin, becauſe it cannot wean them from the temptation. For the *unjuſt gain* ſtill keeps poſſeſſion of their heart, and all their grief and change of mind is not able to remove it: Their brothers loſs is ſtill their love and delight, and all their repentance cannot bring them to repair it. They ſtill adhere to, and love the *fruits of their offence*, more than they do the *rewards of amendment* and *obedience*: So that if they ſhould be tempted by theſe inducements again, they would have the ſame effect upon them which they had at firſt, and make them as unjuſt as they were before.

Thus neceſſary is *reſtitution* and *reparation of a wrong*, to evidence that men *truly* and *perfectly repent* of it.

But beſides this way of its being neceſſary, *viz.* as *a neceſſary effect of a compleat repentance*; it is alſo *neceſſary in it ſelf*, as a piece of *common juſtice* and *natural equity*, without which no man, who has done wrong, can be an *equal* or a *juſt man.* For the great Rule of *Juſtice* is, *That every man ſhould have his own*, and *that no other mens force* or *fraud ſhould ſpoil him of it*, or *any ways detain it from him.* So that if any man has *deſtroyed* or *waſted* any thing belonging to another, he muſt *make it up*; if he has *taken it to himſelf*, he muſt *reſtore it.* For whatſoever Goods he has wreſted wrongfully from his Neighbour, are not his Goods, but his *Neighbours* ſtill. For that which transfers *Propriety* from one *private perſon* to another, is *his own conſent*; this being the very nature of *Dominion*, that *a man may diſpoſe of a thing at his own will*, and *no other man may meddle with it, without he agree to it:* So that it muſt be his *own voluntary act*, and not *anothers force* or *fraud*, that can *juſtly make an alienation.* If then one man wrongfully poſſeſſes anothers Goods, he is *no Owner*, but an *Uſurper*; he enjoys what belongs not to him, and cannot be a juſt man, till he has c'eared his hands of the others Goods, and made reſtitution.

Thus neceſſary is *reſtitution of unjuſt Poſſeſſions*, and *reparation of unjuſt damages*, not only *to evidence a ſincere* and

and *sufficient repentance*, but also as an instance of *common Equity* and *natural Justice*, and to maintain a *mutual peace, security*, and *confidence* in the World. And therefore God, that he might take away *all temptation* to *sportful*, or *malicious injuries*, and *unjust gettings* in *some*; and all *enmity* and *strife*, *unsociable fears* and *jealousies*, *murmurings* and *complaints* by reason of them in *others*; has laid a great stress upon it, and made it plainly necessary to the obtaining of his (c) *pardon*. *Render to every man his due*, saith the Apostle, *and owe no man any thing, but to love one another*, Rom. 13. 7, 8. This is plainly necessary, and a duty that will not be dispensed with. For as *Ezekiel* says, it is not only, *if the wicked man turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right*: but if, together with that, *he give again what he hath robbed*, that *he shall surely live, and not die*, Ezek. 33. 14, 15.

(c) *Non remittitur peccatum; nisi restituatur ablatum.* Aug. ad Maced.

If then we are guilty of any injury, and have at any time wrongfully damnified our Neighbour; we must not only seek to be reconciled, and remove the offence, but withal we must repair the loss, and make him in as good a state, if by any means we can, as he was in before. And therefore if we have spoiled him of his *Goods* by *fraud, oppression*, or *robbery*; we must in the fittest way, which our *own prudence*, or the *wisdom our friends* and *spiritual Guides* shall direct, *restore* them unto him again. If we have injured him in his *good name*, and by *slanders, false stories*, and *malicious representations*, put a *blot upon his honour, advantaged his enemies, disingaged his friends*, and *stopt his promotion*; we must *confess our fault*, and declare our miscarriage; we must *endeavour to wipe off* all the dirt which we have thrown upon him, and to set him right again in the apprehensions of all men; but of those most especially, who by our means were brought to think ill and hardly of him. If we have wrongfully deprived him of his *liberty*, or of any thing else, by *false witness*, or *corrupt judgment*, or any other way, we must take *shame* to our selves, and *clear up his innocence*, and take off all the *undeserved reproach*, and all the *criminal disguise*, wherein we had involved him.

As for some injuries, 'tis true, they *never can be repaired*, nor is it possible to make the persons whole again,

who

who suffered by them. Of which sort, are *Murder*, *Adultery*, a *customary constant fraud in traffick*, and the like. But although the damage in these can never be intirely repaired, yet in part it may; and when we cannot do as much as we should, 'tis but just and necessary that we do as much as we can. And therefore in those injuries whereby *many are made to suffer*, as it ordinarily happens in *Murder* and *Adultery*, which damnifie not the *persons injured* alone, but their *Families* also and *Dependants*; we must make restitution to those that can, that we may be pardoned for neglecting those who cannot receive it. And if few of the injured persons are to be met with, as it happens through the *infinity of Sufferers* by a *constant fraud in commerce*; there cannot be a better commutation, than to put *the poor into their place*, and make the needy their Receivers. Which exchange was most commendably resolved on by a *great offender* in this kind, *viz.* *Zacchæus*, the *Chief* among the *Publicans*. For when he comes to repent of his *Publican* sins, at Christ's calling of him, *Luke* 19. He makes his penitential profession thus; *If I have taken away any thing by false accusation*, or unjust force, says he, *from any man*, whom I know and can repay again, according as the (*d*) Law prescribes in that Point, *I restore him it* again *fourfold*. And as for all other exactions, which can never be particularly repaid, whereof I, and generally (*e*) all in my employment are guilty without number; I endeavour to atone them, according to the (*f*) Jewish custom, by giving as much, or more to the indigent and needy in their stead: For *behold the half of my Goods I give unto the poor*, ver. 8.

(*d*) Exod. 22. 1.

(*e*) πάντες πλῶναι, πάντες οἱόν ἁμαρτίας. *Dict. Zenon. Comœd.*

(*f*) *Vid. Dr. Light.* Hor. Heb. in loc.

Thus is restitution to repair the damage, as necessary, as confession is to atone the offence, which our sins have given to our Brethren. And this it is, whether our Brethren know of the unjust loss or hindrance which we have caused to them, or no. As for the *confession of our fault*, to have the offended party reconciled; that, 'tis true, is necessary only to make peace where they have taken offence, and therefore it is of no necessity where they do not know our sin, because there they cannot be offended by it. But as for the *reparations of unjust damages*, that is necessary out of natural equity and strict Justice; so that we are bound to it, whereso'ever Justice is infringed,

and

and any one is injured, whether he underſtands it, and be offended at it, or no. If then our Neighbour knows he has been injured by us, and is offended at it, we muſt not only make reſtitution to repair his loſs, but alſo beg his pardon to atone the offences; and to procure a reconciliation. But if he is wronged and knows it not, we need make no acknowledgments, 'tis true, ſince he has no need to be reconciled; but ſtill we muſt make a juſt amends, and repair the damage, be the way of doing it never ſo private, and managed with as much diſcretion as can be uſed about it.

But to prevent *needleſs fears*, as well at to preſs a *neceſſary practice* in this point; I think it not amiſs, to add theſe limitations to the *obligation* of this *Duty, viz.* that we are bound to it only *in matters of ſtrict Juſtice, not of Charity and Courteſie*; and *there too only ſo far as we can, and as we have an opportunity to perform it.*

Firſt, We are *bound to make amends and reſtitution, only upon ſins againſt ſtrict Juſtice, not upon ſins againſt Charity.* All reſtitution muſt be of ſomething, whereto another man has a *full* and *compleat right*, otherwiſe it is not *reſtoring*, but *giving* it. It is returning of a thing to its right owner, and putting him into poſſeſſion who has the juſt title and propriety. Now ſuch right as this, no man has to things of *Charity*, but only to things of *ſtrict Juſtice.*

'Tis true indeed, there is a certain dueneſs in them, as well as there is in *theſe*; we ought to *give Alms*, as well as to *perform Contracts*; to be *grateful, compaſſionate, courteous*, and *condeſcenſive*, as well as to *reſtore a pledge*, or *fulfil a bargain.* And ſince there is a *Duty on our parts to beſtow theſe Offices*, there muſt be anſwerable ſome kind of *right in others to receive* them. So that even the inſtances of Charity and Ingenuity, are in ſome ſenſe a matter of right and duty; and becauſe thoſe who receive them are not altogether void of title, but have ſome right to them, they are oft-times in Scripture called works of *Righteouſneſs*, and the perſons who perform them, are called upon that account *juſt* or *righteous Men.* Thus where we read, *Take heed that you do not your* (g) *Alms before men*; it is read by ſeveral Copies, *Take heed that you do not your* (h) *righteouſneſs before them*, Matth. 6. 1. The *merciful* men, *Matth.* 25. who are deſcribed by their

(g) ἐλεημοσύνη.

(h) δικαιοσύνη.

Compaſſio-

Compassionateness, *Alms*, and *Hospitality*, ver. 35, 36. are called the *righteous* men in the next Verse, *Then shall the righteous say, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred?* &c. *ver.* 37. Thus the *charitable Lender*, is called a *righteous person*, *Psal.* 37. the *righteous is merciful, and lendeth*, ver. 25, 26. and *Joseph's* being a *pitiful, kind Husband*, and *unwilling publickly to expose his Wife Mary*, whom *he found with child before they came together*, but resolving to *put her away privily*, is called *his being a* (i) *just man*, Matth. 1. 19.

(i) δίκαιος ὢν.

Some right then our Brethren have to our works of mercy, liberality, gratitude, candor, affability, courtesie, and other instances of *common charity* and *ingenuity*: So much dueness there is in them, and so much right and title they have to them, as can denominate them works of righteousness, and us who perform them just and righteous men.

But this right, is much less than that, which they have to all expressions of strict Justice; and is rather an imperfect draught and a beginning of right, than right it self. For all full and perfect right bestows a *title*, and invests a man in *propriety*; so that what he has a compleat right to, he may justly call his own. And such a right as this, all men have to the safety of their persons, goods, and reputations, and all other things which are a matter of strict Justice. They have a full claim to them, and cannot, without their own consent be deprived of them: And therefore if any private person like themselves damnifies them in these, they may justly complain he wrongs them, and demand satisfaction; and when they receive it, they do not thank him as for a free and charitable gift, but look on it as their own, and accept is as a debt and necessary restitution.

But as for that right, *which men have to all expressions of kindness and charity*; *it founds no full claim, nor invests a man with Lordship and Propriety*; so that he must own *another's kindness* when he receives them, and cannot say he is deprived of his own, when they are withheld

held from him. This right does not confer Propriety, but doth only something towards it; it makes it another's duty to give us something, and his gift must compleat our Title and bestow a perfect Claim to it. Thus, for instance, if any person has an opportunity put into his hands, to *be helpful to a man in want or misery*, when the needful persons *ask an alms*, they do not *demand a debt*, but *intreat his charity*; they do not exact what is *their own*, but beg what *is his*; So that he has an opportunity, not of *doing justice*, but of *shewing kindness* and charity when he gives; and they are under a duty, of *acknowledging his kindness*, and *being thankful* when they receive it. And the case is the same, in *gratitude, candor, courtesie*, and other instances of Ingenuity and Charity. The right which any man has to them, is not so full, that he can say they are his own. There is a duty indeed on other men to give, and that *gift may make them his in time*; but till that is done, he cannot say he is injuriously deprived of any thing which of compleat right belongs to him, or requires that they, who have taken nothing that is his from him, should repair the loss, and make him a restitution.

Restitution then, in transgressions against strict justice, is a duty, because there men are deprived of that which is really their own; and it is but justice, and not thankworthy, that he who deprives them of that, should give it back again, and restore it to them. But in sins against meer Charity, it is no duty; for there, since men have lost nothing that is their own, they can demand nothing to be restored to them. By these *sins of uncharitableness*, indeed, *God is dishonoured*, and by our *amendment that must be repaired*; our *Brethren* are sometimes *justly offended*, and when they are so, by our *penitential acknowledgment they must be reconciled*; but by a bare uncharitableness none of them is *injured*, so that there is no unjust loss which should be repaired, nor any thing taken from them which ought again to be restored to them.

2. We are bound to make *amends for injuries*, and to *restore* that which was taken away by them, *so far only*

only as we can, and *as we have an opportunity of doing it.*

(k) *Non remittitur peccatum, niſi reſtituatur ablatum; ſed cum reſtitui poteſt.* Aug. Ep. ad Maced. quæ eſt Ep. 54.

We are bound, I ſay, to make *reſtitution ſo far only as we* (*k*) *can.* Some injuries in the *nature of the thing* can never wholly be repaired, as *Murder* and *Adultery*, for which ſatisfaction cannot be made to the *perſons principally concerned*, but only to their *families* and *dependents.* Others cannot be compleatly recompenſed, becauſe of the *number of perſons* that ſuffered by them, many whereof will never be ſeen again, or are forgotten; as it happens in a *cuſtomary conſtant fraud in commerce*, which cannot otherwiſe be perfectly requited, than by putting the *poor into their ſtead*, or by ſome other *pious* and *religious commutation.* And others, laſtly, cannot have a compleat amends, by reaſon of *our inability compleatly to amend them.* Some *croſs accidents of Providence*, or ſome former *vices* or *careleſsneſs of our own*, (which though, now we repent of, yet we cannot help,) have made us *poor*, and ſo unable to preſerve all from being loſers by us, and to reſtore to every man again what at any time we had injuriouſly ſpoiled, or taken from them. And now, when by any of theſe ways *reſtitution is impoſſible*, and a thing which the *trueſt penitent* cannot perform, God will not exact it of him. If he doth *what he is able*, when he *cannot do all*; if he reſtores the damage to the *injured perſons dependents* and *relations*, when he can make no reſtitution *to himſelf*; or if he reſtores it to *charitable* and *religious uſes*, when he *can do neither*; or if, laſtly, he *confeſs his fault*, and *beg pardon*, and *be forward to return ſervice and good offices*; when he can make *no other reſtitution at all*, he has done what a *true penitent* ought to do, and God will graciouſly accept him. His *will* ſhall be taken for the *deed*, ſince it is in his power to will only, but not to do; and through his honeſt readineſs and endeavours to perform it, if he could, he ſhall be interpreted to have performed it.

We are bound, I ſay again, to make an actual reſtitution, only *when we have an opportunity of doing it.* An *honeſt purpoſe*, as was ſaid above, ſhall be accepted for all *affirmative precepts*, till there be a ſeaſon offered for an *actual performance.* When there is an opportunity for it, we muſt not only will, but do and practiſe them: But till that happens, all that God expects, or that we can do,

is

is to resolve to practise them, as we shall find occasion. And therefore if honestly we seek an opportunity to repair a wrong, but cannot find it, let us not disturb our souls with fears and scruples, but rest in peace, in confidence that our honest purpose shall bear us out, till God's Providence affords us an opportune season wherein we may perform.

And in judging of this, *when a fit season is come*, and *when such an opportunity is offered as we are bound to make our restitution in:* we must neither be *too strict* and *rigorous*, nor *too gentle* and *remiss*.

We *must not be too strict*, and tye our selves up to so much quickness in restoring, as to run upon *great inconveniences* that are of far more weight than the thing is worth, to *prejudice considerably our own affairs*, and *neglect*, it may be, some other as *weighty duties*, rather than *delay a little longer*; especially when it may be done at *another time* as well as *then*, and the damage which the *injured person* sustains by such delay of the restitution, is nothing in respect of that which we incurr by a *precipitate dispatch* of it. Under such incommodious circumstances, we may be allowed to put it off a while, and we need not fear lest our Brother should be offended, or farther injured by such delay, since we have *just reason to presume he willingly agrees to it*. For thus far we may reasonably presume upon the *free consent* of all the *conversable part of mankind*, that, out of *common humanity*, and *compassion*, they will be content to deny themselves in *small* things, to advantage us in *great* ones; and to want some *slight* conveniences themselves, rather than put us, for the supplying of them, to deprive our selves of such as are *considerably weightier*. And where we have so good a reason to *presume of their consent* to it, we shall not be trespassers against them, or any ways offensive to them, by our delaying of it.

But then, on the other hand, we must not be *too remiss* and *partial to our selves*, in judging of a fitting season for such a preparation, nor prone to press upon our Brethrens wants and inconveniencies, but to spare our own. We must not refuse an offer, because it is joined with *some pains*, and clogg'd with *some difficulties*, and may occasion *some loss* and *hindrance* to us, or *additional expence*. Our slowness in returning a just amends at any time, but chiefly

chiefly where the *opportunities for it are more uncertain*, muſt not be ſuch as argues that we *ſeek to excuſe it*, or are *very indifferent to it*, and *eaſily put by it*: It muſt not ſeem to intimate that we are in *ſuſpenſe about it*, or have not *perfectly reſolved upon it*, or, at leaſt, that the performance of it is a *forced, ungrateful thing*, ſo that we would not come to it ſo long as we can find any pretence to turn it off, or are able to overlook it. For this ſhews evidently, that our *repentance is without zeal*, that our *ſorrow is without life*, and that, at beſt, we are acted only by an *imperfect* and *inſufficient*, if not alſo by an *unſincere Purpoſe*. And therefore to *vindicate the honour*, and *perfect the degrees* of *our repentance* and *obedient purpoſes*, which are abſolutely neceſſary to our pardon and acceptance, we muſt ſhew ſuch an *overplus of affectionate haſte* to repair our injured Brother's loſs, as manifeſts that we are more concerned for him, than we are for our ſelves, and that we regard the pains and burden of our own part much leſs, than in all rational preſumption, were he to judge of it, he himſelf would. This we ſhall do where the *ſorrow* of our ſin is *great*, where we have a *high zeal* againſt it, and have *fully* and *compleatly repented of it*: And when we are actuated and carried on by theſe, they will prevent all doubts, and never ſuffer any *hard* and *uncertain queſtion* about the fitneſs of the opportunity, to come into a debate of Conſcience. But if men have not ſo much *love* for the duty of Reſtitution, and ſo much *zeal* in their repentance, as will make them overlook *little things*; if their repentance has no more warmth, than is juſt neceſſary to make them do what is indiſpenſibly to be done, ſo that they come to *weigh ſcruples*, and nicely to debate whether ſome *doubtful hindrances* are *ſufficient* to delay their reſtitution, or no: The beſt way that I can direct them to, is to refer their *Brothers loſs in wanting for ſome time*, and theirs in *making a preſent reparation*, to the judgment of their *ſpiritual Guides*, or any other *wiſe adviſers*; and then peaceably to acquieſce in that courſe, whereto thoſe wiſe and good men ſhall direct them.

As for the duty of *making reparation* then, where our ſins have *injured men*, it is plainly this. In ſins which are not only againſt *Charity*, but alſo againſt *Juſtice*, whereby we have wronged any man either in his *Perſon*, *Goods*,

Goods, or *Reputation*, or the like; whether he *knows* that we have injured him or no, we must *make a just Amends* and *Restitution*. This must be made, *where it can*, to the *injured man himself*; and where *that is not to be done*, to his *Family* and *Dependents*; and where *that is impracticable* too, to the *poor*, or to *God himself*, by some *charitable* or *pious Commutation*. And this we are bound to do, *so far as it is in our Power*, and *according as we can find an Opportunity*; being *desirous of it*, and *fully resolved upon it when we want one*; and *doing as much as we can* towards it, and *asking Pardon for that wherein we fail, when we are disabled from doing all*. It is not enough after these Sins to *do so no more*, unless, according to these Rules, we make *amendment* for what we have done already. *Reformation* and *forsaking of the Fault*, will atone for any other *wilful* Sin, whereby we have *offended none but God*: and *that*, and *penitential Acknowledgements*, will expiate those, whereby we have *offended* both *God* and *Men*: but if we have not only *offended*, but *wronged* also and *injured* them, we must not only *amend our Fault* to *please God*, and *penitentially acknowledge* it to *appease them*; but, as ever we would secure the Pardon of it, we must *restore the Spoil*, and *repair the Wrong*, and set them, as far as may be, in as good a State as our Sin took from them.

CHAP. III.

Of the Remedies for our Involuntary Sins.

HAving shewed in the *former* Chapters, what Remedy Christ's Gospel has afforded us for the most dangerous sort of Offences, *viz.* our *chosen* and *wilful ones*; I shall proceed now in this, to enquire what Remedy he has likewise provided for our *involuntary* and *unchosen Sins*.

As for our involuntary Slips themselves, they also come under the *Letter of the Law*, and so far are within the compass of the Penalty. They are a doing what the Law forbids, and so an incurring of that Evil

which it threatens. For the Words of the Law it ſelf are unlimited and univerſal, they make no exception of voluntary or involuntary, conſidered or unconſidered; but they require that ſomething ſhould be performed or omitted, and threaten us if we do it not. So that if they were to be tryed by the *Strictneſs* of the Letter and the *Rigour of the Laws*, even our involuntary Slips themſelves would prove a matter of our Condemnation.

But if God ſhould proceed to judge us, I will not ſay according to what the compaſs of the Letter of *Law* would comprehend, but even according to the utmoſt of what the *juſtice of the thing* would bear, the greateſt part of our involuntary Sins would be charged upon us, for how few are there, who live up to the *utmoſt of their Poſſibilities?* but they fall ſometimes where they might ſtand, and are raſh in ſome inſtances, when, if they had uſed due Care, they might have deliberated. We do not come up to that, which according to the higheſt Ability of our Natures, and the utmoſt Stretch of our Faculties, might be done: And therefore letting aſide the Rigour of the Letter, which, requiring more than can be performed, muſt threaten where the Puniſhment that is threatened cannot in juſtice be exacted: Yet ſhould God proceed with us for *moſt* of our involuntary Slips, according to the utmoſt Severity which Juſtice it ſelf would bear, we ſhould be in an evil State, and give in a ſad account for them. So that we have need to be *ſorrowful*, even for the *greateſt part* of our *involuntary Sins*, and to *beg God's Pardon for them*, that all the Defects of our Care may be made up by the Riches of his Mercy and Goodneſs.

And as for the reſt of them, which ſteal from us not ſo much through any thing of our *culpable Neglect* as our *unhappineſs*, and are purely involuntary and unavoidable; an *after-Grief* is neceſſary in them alſo, although it be only to *evidence our Involuntarineſs* in doing them, and that our Wills were perfectly againſt them. Becauſe, as was obſerved above, our *ignorant Offences* themſelves cannot in reaſon be eſteemed *involuntary*, further than we ſhew our Wills to be ſet againſt them, by our *trouble at them*, and our *Prayers for Pardon*, when afterwards we come to diſcover and underſtand

ſtand them. So that ſome *Repentance* is ſtill due, even for our *involuntary and unchoſen Sins*, and they muſt have our *Sorrow* and our *Prayers* before they are fit to be forgiven.

And here we all experience the abundance of God's Love; for he allows for theſe pitiable Infirmities, and has provided us of a Remedy, which if we make uſe of, we ſhall never be condemned for them.

Under *Moſes's Law*, theſe involuntary Slips of Ignorance and Inconſideration, being they were continually incurred, were allowed the Benefit of a continual Atonement. For God himſelf appointed ſeveral Sacrifices for them which ſhould expiate their Guilt, ſo that every Man, who was ſubject to them, was furniſhed with a ſufficient Remedy againſt them.

And ſince † *Grace* aboundeth more by *Jeſus Chriſt* than it did by *Moſes*, as they had their Remedy and Relief under the *Law of Moſes*; ſo ought they to have the ſame much more, and accordingly they have it, under the *Goſpel of Chriſt*. † John i. 17.

But now as for *this Remedy* which Chriſt has preſcribed for the Expiation of our *involuntary Sins*; it is not the *ſame* which he requires to the Expiation of our *voluntary and wilful ones*. For that, as we have ſeen, is nothing leſs than a *particular Repentance* and amendment, in the forſaking of that very Sin which we committed wilfully. But as for our involuntary Sins, this can be no cure for them, becauſe it is impracticable, and not poſſible to be effectually uſed about them. For we ſhall always live ſubject to them more or leſs; and although we may labour and ſtrive againſt them, yet ſhall we never be able, as long as we are in this World, to get entirely free from them. For we have no Power and Choice to avoid that, which either we cannot ſee, or cannot conſider of; and all theſe Sins come in upon the account, either of our unwill'd Ignorance, or Inconſideration. And that cannot be the Cure aſſigned for our involuntary Sins, which is impoſſible in their Caſe, nor can their pardon be made to depend upon it, becauſe then they would be wholly impardonable and deſperate, and the Offer of Pardon to them could not be in earneſt.

But that Remedy which Chriſt has appointed for them, and that Repentance whereupon he will graci-

ously pardon and forgive them, is in the *general*, an *hearty*, (a) *Repentance and Reformation of all wilful Sins, and an intire Obedience in all such Actions as are voluntary and chosen.* If we serve God faithfully and truly in all our other Actions, where we do see our duty, and can chuse to practise it; he will connive at these Slips, which, after an honest Care and Industry, are involuntary and unchosen. For any *kind Master* would do so, to his *honest Servant*; and more especially every *tender Father* would, to his *Obedient Child.* And God, who is *Love it self*, being the *first Fountain* and the *compleatest Pattern* of all kindness in the World, will never be out-done in any *Love, that is excellent* and *Praiseworthy*, by his own Creatures. But if their kindness would bear with such infirmities and Oversights of an honest Mind, his will dispense with them much rather.

(a) ἀποτελήσωμεν τὰ ἀνήκοντα τῇ ἀμώμῳ βουλήσει αὐτοῦ· ἀποβαίντες, ἐφ' ἑαυτῷ πίστιν ἀδικίαν καὶ ἀνομίαν, πλεονεξίαν. ἔρους, κακοηθείας, δόλους, ψιθυρισμούς, καταλαλιάς, ὑπερηφανίαν, &c. ---- αὕτη ἡ ὁδός, ἀγαπητοί, ἐν ᾗ εὑρεθήσεται τὸ σωτήριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ προστάτου καὶ βοηθοῦ τῆς ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν. Clem. Rom. 1. Ep. ad Cor. 35, 36.

The faithful Servants therefore and obedient Children of God, who repent particularly of all their other Sins that are known and wilful, and effectually amend *them*; shall be sure to find this Favour at the Hands of their heavenly Lord and Father, for all these Failings which are involuntary and unchosen. Their Obedience in other things shall plead their Excuse, and make their unwill'd Slips in these to be uncondemning.

But to be yet more particular, these involuntary Transgressions of Men, who are obedient in all their voluntary Actions, shall certainly be pardoned through the means of these *particular* Duties.

1. Their *Prayers.*

2. Their *Charity* and *Forgiveness towards the Offences of others.*

1. Their involuntary Failings of Ignorance and Inconsideration, shall be forgiven them *upon their Prayers.* If they beg God's pardon for them, he is as ready to grant it, as they are to desire it. And this we are sure of, because no *earthly Parent*, who is wise and good, would refuse to bestow it in such Cases at the Request of his Children; whereas they have nothing near that Pity and Tenderness for *their* Children, which God

God has for *his*. And this is an Argument, which Christ himself has taught us to rely upon in this Matter: *If you*, says he, *being evil, will* yet, for all that, at their Request, *give good Gifts to your Children; how much more shall your heavenly Father*, who has not the least Taint of your Illness, *give* the best of Gifts, even *the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* Luke 11. 13.

And indeed that we may never want this Remedy, Christ has put a Prayer for this purpose daily into our Mouths; that since our involuntary Sins are of *daily Incursion*, we may as *daily beg pardon* for them. For he has made it a part of our *daily Prayers*, to ask Pardon, among others, for our *daily Trespasses*, this being one of those Petitions, which he has taught us to put up as often as we do that for our daily Bread, that he would *forgive us our Trespasses*, Matt. 6. 11, 12. And this St. *Austin* observes of it; (*b*) *For those small Sins*, saith he, *which no Man can avoid, was this Petition in the Lord's Prayer inserted.*

(*b*) *Tenete vitam bonam in Præceptis Dei, ut Baptismum custodiatis in finem. Non dico vobis quia sine peccato hic vivetis: sed sunt venialia, sine quibus vita ista non est. Propter omnia peccata Baptismus inventus est: Propter levia, sine quibus esse non possumus, Oratio inventa. Quid habet Oratio? Dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut nos dimittimus Debitoribus nostris. Semel abluimus Baptismate, quotidie Oratione*, Augustin. de Symb. ad Catechum. in Art. de Remissione Peccatorum. l. 1. c. 6.

Nay, long before him, St. *Clement* teaches the same Doctrine, of *our Prayers being a most sure expiation for all our involuntary Sins.* For in his *first* Epistle to the *Corinthians*, relating that truly Christian State wherein their great Apostle *Paul* had very lately left them: among several other parts of their Character, he gives this for one: (*c*) *Being filled with holy desires, and a vertuous Will, with a good and commendable Forwardness of Mind, and with a pious Assurance of being heard, you lifted up your Hands to Almighty God, beseeching him to be merciful and propitious to you, if in any thing you had sinned*

(*c*) Μεσοί τε ὁσίας βουλῆς ἐν ἀγαθῇ προθυμίᾳ μετ' εὐσεβοῦς πεποιθήσεως, ἐξετείνατε τὰς χεῖρας ὑμῶν πρὸς τὸν παντοκράτορα θεὸν, ἱκετεύοντες αὐτὸν ἱλεὼς γένεσθαι, εἴ τι ἀκουσίως ἡμάρτητε. Clem. Rom. Ep. 1. ad Cor. c. 2.

INVOLUNTARILY. Having first, as says the good Father, a *vertuous Heart*, and a *Holy disposed Will*, so that in nothing their Heart was disobedient by sinning wilfully; they were *forward to ask God Forgiveness* for all those Sins, which they had committed involuntarily. And this *forwardness*, says he, was (*d*) *good* and *commendable*, and their Confidence of obtaining Pardon upon their Prayer, was *pious*; it was a (*e*) *godly* and a *pious Confidence*.

(*d*) ἐν ἀγαθῇ προθυμίᾳ.
(*e*) μετ' εὐσεβοῦς πεποιθήσεως.

This is a *plain* and *full* Testimony, and withal it is of more Authority than ordinary. For this *Clement*, as we may observe, was one who was sent out by the Apostles themselves to preach Christ's Will, and intrusted by them to declare unto the World, what are the Terms of Remission of Sins and the Condition of Pardon; so that what we hear from his Mouth, we may almost look upon as *Gospel*. St. *Paul* himself makes *honourable* mention of him, calling him his *Fellow-Labourer: Help Clement my fellow-Labourer, whose Name is in the Book of Life*, Phil. 4. 3. And the thing it self which he testifies, is not so much a Matter of *Faith* and *Opinion*, wherein an honest Man may sometimes err and be mistaken; as an *historical Relation* of a Matter of *Fact*. For he is recounting, what a brave and gallant Church they were in that state, wherein the great Apostle left them: And as one of the *Particulars* of that Religion, this comes in, That as for their *involuntary Sins*, *they begged God's Pardon* for them, and that too *with a pious Assurance of obtaining it*. So that as for this Practice, of a *confident Hope of Pardon for their involuntary Sins upon their Prayers*, it was not only such as St. *Clement* the *Companion* and *Fellow-Labourer* of St. *Paul* approved; but such moreover as the *Apostle Paul* himself, who had planted Christianity among them, had left with them.

This therefore is one great Remedy for our involuntary Slips, *They shall be forgiven us upon our Prayers for Pardon and Forgiveness.*

And so shall they,

2. Upon our *Charity*, and *Forgiveness of the Offences of others.*

As

As God himself delights in *Mercy*, so doth he require that we should; and to oblige us to it the more, he has made our kind dealing towards our Brethren the *(f)* Condition of this kindness towards us. *Above all things*, says S. *Peter*, *have fervent Charity among your selves; for Charity shall cover*, or procure Pardon for, *the multitude of* those many, because unavoidable and involuntary *Sins*, 1 Pet. 4. 8. And hereto Charity is then especially available, when it is shewn in the highest Instance of all, *viz.* in *procuring our Brethrens repentance* and *conversion*. For thus says S. *James*, *Brethren, if any of you do err from the Truth, and one convert him*; for his Encouragement *let him know* this from me, *That he who converts the Sinner from the Error of his way, shall* not only *save* the other's *Soul from death*, but *shall* also *hide a multitude of* his own *sins*, James 5. 19, 20. *(f)* Luke 6. 36, 37, 38.

Thus is charity in all Acts of *Kindness* and *Beneficence*, most available to procure the Pardon of our *many* because *unavoidable* and *involuntary Sins*. But among all the Instances of Charity, *one* is particularly singled out by our Saviour as a necessary Condition to our Forgiveness at God's Hands, and that is *our forgiving others that offend against us*. For the Man, *who would have no pity upon his fellow-servant as his Lord had shewed upon him*, was *unpardoned* all again, and *delivered over to the Tormentors till he should pay the utmost Farthing*, Matth. 18. 32, 33, 34. and the *same* measure our *heavenly Father will mete out to us, if we forgive not every one his Brother their trespasses*, v. 35. And that a Condition so necessary to our Forgiveness might never be forgotten, our Lord has put it expressly into that Prayer, which he has taught us to put up daily for the Pardon of our own Sins. For he bids us pray, that *God would forgive us our trespasses against him*, even *as we forgive those that trespass against us*, Matth. 6. 12. And that we may take the more notice of a Point so indispensible, he tells us as soon as ever the Prayer is done, that *if we forgive men their trespasses, our heavenly Father will also forgive us: but if we forgive not men their trespasses, neither will our heavenly Father forgive us our trespasses*, verse 14. 15.

If we are rigorous and severe therefore with our Brethren, God will be so with us also; and when he comes to judge us, we shall find as little Allowance at his Hands

as they have done at ours. For *he shall have Judgment* from God *without Mercy, who* to Men *hath shewn no Mercy*; but if any Man has been merciful to his Brethren, God will be much more so to him; for *Mercy rejoyceth* even *against Judgment*, James 2. 13. This will be the greatest Motive to procure Grace, and the best Plea we can urge to obtain Mercy at God's Hands; *Blessed are the Merciful*, says our Saviour, *for they shall obtain Mercy*, Matt. 5. 7.

And thus, as for our *involuntary Slips*, we see now what is their Remedy; they shall be forgiven us upon *our Prayers*, and upon *the Prayers of our Friends* and *other good Christians for us*, and upon *our Charity* and *forgiveness of other Men. With the same measure that we mete, God will mete out to us again*, Mat. 7. 2. So that if we shew Mercy to the unwill'd Sins, yea and the voluntary Offences of other Men; if in other things we are obedient, we shall be sure to find it for our own.

And thus at last we see, what Remedy the Gospel has provided us for all sorts of Offences, whether they be our *voluntary* or *involuntary* Sins. And upon the whole matter we find, that our Case is not desperate under any sort of Sins, but that if we will use it, we have a sufficient Cure for them. For if we are in a State of Death by reason of any *wilful* Sin; let us but *particularly repent of it* and *amend it*, and if it either *injured* or *offended our Brethren, seek to be reconciled* and *repair the Wrong*, and we are restored to Pardon. And if in any thing we have fallen *involuntarily*, let us but *pray* and be *merciful*, and we are forgiven. And either way, when God comes to judge us, whether we have in all Points *fulfilled his Laws*, or are *pardoned our Transgressions of them*, we shall be *acquitted by him*. We shall be safe at that Day, if we have either *kept the Condition*, or *used the Remedy*; for a *Pardon* will justifie us to as much purpose, as we should have been justified by an *unerring Obedience*.

To apply this then to every Man's particular Case. Has any Man, whether *learned* or *unlearned*, *wilfully* and *advisedly* committed an Act of any *known* and *notorious* Sin, whether of *Blasphemy*, *Perjury*, *common Swearing*, *Witchcraft*, *Idolatry*, *Drunkenness*, *Fornication*, *Adultery*, *Lying*, *Slander*, *Fraud*, *Oppression*, *Theft*, *Murder*, *Rebellion*, *Tumult*, or the like? has he been guilty

guilty of these, or of any other sins of like nature whereat all mens consciences are wont to boggle, and their hearts to check them, till they have sinned themselves into numbness and stupefaction? Let him *particularly amend that evil way*, and *retract that very sin*, and, if his Crime implyed any, as far as he can, *repair the wrong* which it did his Brethren; and then he is in a safe condition. For his particular repentance and amendment, shall make up the breach which such wilful offence had made betwixt God and him, and shall most certainly procure his pardon.

Has any man of opportunities and understanding committed any Action, of *Lasciviousness*, *Uncleanness*, *Passionateness*, *Fierceness*, *Evil Speaking*, *Backbiting*, *Censoriousness*, *Uncandidness*, *Unmercifulness*, *Unpeaceableness*, or the like? has any such man, or *any other whatsoever*, been guilty of *these* or the *like* offences when his own *Soul reproved him*, and either did, or would have set the sinfulness of his present action before him, unless he has sinned in it so long, as to lose all sense of it, and to stifle all suggestions against it? Let him also *particularly* amend and reform such voluntary sin, and make his peace with his offended Brethren that he may be saved. His particular repentance shall likewise make his peace, and procure for him God's favour and acceptance.

Has any man, lastly, been *surprized* into *rash words* and *censures*, into *sudden anger*, and *trifling discontents*, and *peevish*, or *uncourteous*, or *uncandid*, or *uncondescensive behaviour*? Has he been *wearied* by long importunity, into some *loose thoughts* and *wanton fancies*, into some *small fretfulness*, or *impatience*, or the like? Has he spoke or acted unadvisedly, through *deep grief*, or *violent fears*, or other *astonishing unwill'd passion*? Let him *bewail his failings*, and *strive* against them, although he be not able perfectly to overcome them; let him seek peace, and practise *charity*, and *shew mercy* upon the like errours and escapes, and upon the more wilful offences of his Brethren, and then with comfort *beg God's Pardon*. For his Prayers thus attended, shall set him strait, and procure his reconciliation.

If a man is *conscious* to himself, of any of these sorts of sins, these Remedies will certainly restore him. And as

for

for those *unknown* and *secret sins*, whereof his conscience cannot inform him; he has an obvious and an easie expedient, for a *general penitential Prayer* will undoubtedly be accepted for his pardon of them.

Whatsoever therefore his sins be, if he please to make use of it, he is provided of his remedy. Repentance shall surely save his soul, and make atonement for all his offences. So that of whatsoever *nature*, *number*, or *degree* his faults have been, after once he has thus repented of them, they shall never be imputed to him; but through the Merits of Christ's Death, and the Grace of his Gospel, they shall be looked upon as if they had never been.

And thus at last we have seen, what that *Condition is which the Gospel indispensibly exacts of us towards our acceptance* in the last Judgment, what *those defects are whereof it allows*, and what *those Salvo's for all sorts of disobedience which it offers*. For it *requires an entire obedience of all our voluntary actions*; it *bears with all our innocently involuntary failings, and pardons them upon our Prayers and Charity towards others*; and it *admits us to recover our former state* when once we have lost it, by a *particular repentance* and *amendment of all our wilful sins*.

This then is the true Test, whereby at the last Day we must all be tryed. If we have *obeyed entirely*, and *have been guilty of no wilful sin*; or if, when we have, we *did not rest in it*, but *repented* and *amended it*, and, where there was any, *repaired the wrong*, and *sought to be reconciled*; and if we have *begg'd pardon for all our involuntary slips*, and have been diligent in *shewing charity*, and *mercy*, and *forgiveness*, *to atone for them:* then are we *innocent in the accounts of the Gospel*, and when Christ comes to judge us, we shall hear the joyful Sentence, of *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you*, Matt. 25. 34. This repentance and obedience will bear us out, and secure our happiness; but we must not hope that less than this will do it. For *God will take vengeance*, saith S. *Paul*, *on all that obey not the Gospel of Christ*, 2 Thess. 1. 8. and, *Except you repent*, says our Saviour, *you shall all perish*, Luke 13. 5.

And thus having shewn, *what Condition that is, which the Gospel indispensibly exacts to our acceptance in the last Judg-*

Judgment, what defects are consistent with it, and *what remedies, when once 'tis lost, shall again restore to it*; I shall now proceed to that, which I proposed in the *fourth* and *last* place, namely, to *remove those groundless scruples, which perplex the minds of good and safe, but yet erring and misguided people, concerning it,* whereof I shall discourse in the *remaining Chapters.*

CHAP. IV.

Of such groundless Scruples, as make safe, but weak Minds, doubt of their Title to Salvation.

IN matters of Religion and another World, nothing is more ordinarily observable, than that those People are wont to have the greatest fears, who have the least reason for them. For good Christians, altho' they think the best of others, are generally very suspicious of themselves. They have a deep sense of the danger of sin, and a full conviction of the fatal end of disobedience; and that makes them think, that in a matter wherein it so highly concerns them not to be mistaken, they can never be over jealous of their own hearts, or too cautious, lest after all those insupportable punishments, sin should fall to be their own portion.

And this they do especially, if in any *material point,* whereupon as to the Sentence of Life or Death, the Gospel lays a great stress, they are ignorant and erroneous. For there are no terrors in the World comparable to those of Religion, nor have any men upon Earth so much reason to be afraid, as they who are in danger to fall under them. And therefore if there is any thing, which will be of great account in the last Judgment, or what is all one, which they think will be severely accounted for; and they either find themselves to be guilty of it, or, which comes to the same thing, fansie that they are: they must needs be fearfully perplexed, and deprived of all *peace* and *comfort,* tho' really they are in the

the greateſt *ſafety*. 'Tis true, indeed, that in the end they ſhall be no loſers, nor ſhall their *miſtaken fears* ever be *fulfilled* upon them: Becauſe at the laſt Day, God will judge them according to his own Rule, (which they have really performed tho' they knew it not) and not according to their errors and miſapprehenſions of it. Their errors ſhall in no wiſe pervert his Truth, for he ſees what they are, howſoever they may miſtake it; and if he ſees them to be righteous, his ſentence will follow his own knowledge, and he will declare to all the World that they are ſo.

This is the *ſecurity* of all *good men*, as it is the *eternal terror* and *aſtoniſhment* of all *hypocrites* and *ſinners*, that they ſhall be brought before an *unerring* and *uncorrupt Judge*, who can neither be bribed nor deceived, and who cannot miſtake them, or wrongfully condemn them. howſoever they may miſtake, or wrongfully condemn themſelves. And ſince it is ſo, they are really ſafe in their own goodneſs, when they moſt of all ſuſpect their own danger; and ſecure from evil, even whilſt they are afraid of falling under it.

But although every good man is in this *ſafety*, let his underſtanding of himſelf be what it will; yet if in any of thoſe things which he takes to be a matter of life or death, he judges wrong of himſelf, and thinks erroneouſly, he can enjoy no *peace* and *comfort*. He will go to Heaven full of fears, and foreboding thoughts; and never think himſelf in the way to Bliſs till he is actually inthroned in it, and poſſeſſed of it. He will meet indeed with happineſs in the end, but he will have no ſight or expectation of it in the way; for all his life long, he will be tormented with doubts and ſuſpicions, fears and jealouſies; and be ſtill by turns concluding himſelf loſt as to the next World, though he be loſt no where but in his own fancy. And this imagined future miſery, will bring him under a real one for the preſent; it will make him have ſad thoughts and a ſorrowful heart; it will bereave him of all joy and peace, and almoſt overwhelm him in groundleſs perplexity and vexation.

But that pious Souls may not fear where no fear is, nor torment themſelves with unreaſonable expectations; having before ſhewn what that condition really

is which renders any man's a safe condition, I will go on now to remove their groundless scruples and mistakes concerning it, by shewing, *what*, and of *what force those things are, which are wont, without any sufficient reason, to disquiet the minds, and to disturb the peace, of good and safe, but mistaken Christians, about it.*

And as for the *causes of good mens fears*, so far as I have been able to learn them, they are chiefly these that follow.

1. *First*, Good men are wont to call in question the *saveableness of their present*, and the *happiness of their future state*; because after all their care against them, they find that *some motions of the Flesh, some stirrings of their Lusts, some thoughts of evil, do still arise up in them.* They feel themselves subject, to delightsome fancies and desires of forbidden things. They are liable to a *lustful thought*, a *covetous wish*, an insurrection of *anger*, of *envy*, and of several other damning sins.

'Tis true indeed, that these Lusts do not reign in them, because they do not consent to their instigations, nor do what they would have them. They can only inhabit and stir in them, but have not strength enough to give Laws to them; for they repress them e're they are come to will, and chuse much less to fulfil and practise what they incline to. They may, perhaps, have thought and fancy, a wish and inclination after *unchast* pleasures; but they correct themselves there, and never in their hearts consent to an *unlawful embrace*, nor ever proceed to an *unclean action.* In a sudden motion of *anger*, it may be, they may have several *expressions of wrath* and *instances of revenge* occur to their *thoughts*, and obtruding themselves upon their *fancy*; but they stop there, and do not consent to utter an *injurious word*, or to commit a *spiteful action*; and the same they experience by themselves in other instances. In all which, several forbidden things will get into their *thoughts* and *desires*, and steal from them a *wish* or *inclination*; but when once they have done that, they can do no more, being unable either to gain their consent, or to command their practice, so as that they should not only desire, but also chuse and fulfil them.

But altho' they do not suffer sin to reign in them, so as to *consent to it*, or to *fulfil it in the lusts thereof*; yet they fear, lest their very *thoughts*, and *inclinations after it*, should

ſhould prove *damnable.* For God requires the obedience of our *whole man,* of the *mind* and *affections,* as well as of our *wills* and *actions*; and he is diſobeyed by *any,* as well as by *all* our faculties. And ſeeing every ſin is forbidden under pain of death, who knows, but that this admiſſion of ſin into our thoughts and deſires, is a deadly tranſgreſſion. This is one great cauſe of fear, and a rock of offence, to truly honeſt and good Men.

But to take off all doubt and ſcruple upon this account, we muſt know, that *our impotent luſts* and *ineffective deſires of evil things, if they are able to get no further than a thought or wiſh,* tho' at preſent they are a *matter of our exerciſe* and *humiliation,* yet at the Day of Judgment they ſhall be no *Article of death or condemnation.* For Chriſt's Goſpel doth not ſentence us ſeverely upon theſe firſt *motions of a luſt,* or *beginnings of a ſin*; no, if they arrive no higher than *fancy* and *inclination,* through the Merits of Chriſt's Sacrifice there is Grace enough in ſtore for them, and in the Goſpel account they are not grown up to be a matter of Death, nor come within the Confines of deſtruction.

That I may ſpeak with the more diſtinctneſs to this Point, I will here ſhew theſe two things.

1. That *for our feeble luſts and deſires after evil, which are unconſented unto, and unfulfilled, we ſhall not at the laſt day be condemned.*

2. For *what luſts and deſires of them we ſhall.*

1. I ſay, *for our feeble luſts and deſires of evil, which are unconſented to, and unfulfilled, at the day of Judgment no man otherwiſe good ſhall ever be condemned.* God will never ſentence us to Hell, for every *ſudden deſire* and *inclination after ſinful things*; but if it reſt there, and goes no further than bare deſire, he will pardon and paſs it by, but not eternally avenge it.

To ſpeak *diſtinctly* to this Point, theſe *luſtings* and *deſires* are conſiderable, either as to their *firſt birth,* or as to their *indulged* and *allowed continuance*: the *firſt* are *never* damning, and the *latter many times* are no *Article of condemnation.*

As for our bodily luſts and deſires of evil, in their *firſt birth,* I ſay, *they are never damning, nor ſhall any man, who is otherwiſe vertuous* and *obedient, be ever judged to die for them.*

And

And it it were otherwiſe, who could poſſibly be ſaved? For as long as we live in this World, we have all of us theſe *firſt motions* of appetite after evil things, more or leſs, and there is no avoiding of it. For the Laws of God, which are impoſitions ſuperinduced upon our Natures, by their prohibitions, make ſeveral of our moſt *natural appetites* and *deſires* themſelves to be ſinful; the *luſts of the Fleſh*, making up a good part of the *prohibitions* of the Goſpel. But although God by his after-prohibition has made them ſinful, yet from that natural neceſſity which he had laid upon us before, we cannot live intirely free from them. For our Fleſh will luſt, and make offers after ſuch things as are naturally fitted to its liking, and we cannot help it: becauſe our Bodies, ſo long as they are converſant among the things of this World, from their natural frame and conſtitution will ſtill be *delighted* with ſome things, to *crave* and *deſire*; and *pained* by others, to *hate* and *abhor* them. This, I ſay, is *natural*, and whilſt there is any life and ſenſe in our Bodies, the good and evil things of the World muſt of neceſſity thus ſenſibly affect them; and where they are affected with pleaſure, there 'tis natural for them to deſire; as where they feel pain, 'tis natural for them to abhor the thing which occaſions and produces it.

Theſe *firſt* luſtings then and cravings after forbidden things, are natural, and were made neceſſary before the prohibition came to make them ſinful. And if by an after Law men ſhall be condemned for being ſenſibly affected with outward things, or for having a ſudden luſt and inclination after them upon their being ſo ſenſibly affected with them; then ſhall they be condemned for what they could not help, and die for not performing impoſſibilities.

But God neither *can*, nor *doth* make any Laws which exact things ſo rigorous: He *puniſhes nothing in us but what proceeded from our own will*, nor exacts an account of us for our *natural luſts*, and *inclinations*, further than they are ſubject to their *own choice* and *free diſpoſal*. If a *ſudden fear*, or an *unclean deſire*, ariſe up in the heart of an *holy man*, from the *preſence* of *outward objects* or *inward imaginations*, and the *natural temper of his Blood and Spirits*; he ſhall not be put to anſwer for it, becauſe he

he could not prevent it. He could no more hinder it, than he can hinder the *beating of his heart*, or the *motion of his blood*; ſeeing it was no free work of his *will*, but a natural effect of his *temper*. And to be condemned for that, is to ſuffer for having *Fleſh* and *Blood*, as well as *Reaſon* and *Spirit*; and to undergo puniſhment for being made up of *Body* as well as *Soul*, for being a *Man* and not an *Angel*.

As for ſeveral things indeed, which follow upon the *firſt ſuggeſtion of a prohibited object*, and upon the *firſt luſting* after it; they are not the effects of *nature*, but of our own *choice*. For though at firſt *thought* and *fancy* of *evil*, and alſo a *ſudden luſting* after it from its fanſied agreeableneſs, may obtrude it ſelf upon us e're we can obſerve it, and whether we will or no, either by *chance*, or by *occaſion of a temptation*; yet a *continued entertainment of it*, and a ſtay upon it in our imaginations, to cheriſh luſt, and inflame deſire, cannot come upon us but by our *own liking* and *connivence*. For as ſoon as ever we can obſerve them, our thoughts are our own, to diſpoſe of *how*, and upon *what* we pleaſe. And therefore if we pleaſe, we may call them off from the forbidden object. They ſtarted it without our leave, but they muſt have our leave to ſtay upon it.

But yet even theſe *after-thoughts* and *inclinations after forbidden things*, which come thus from the free determination, or at leaſt from the connivence of our own Wills, are not always an Article of our condemnation; but then only, when we *conſent* to do what they ſuggeſt, or *practiſe* and *fulfil* the ſame. For if the forbidden thing is only fanſied in our minds, and craved by our appetites, but has got no conſent of our hearts, nor any endeavours of our lives and actions; according to the gracious terms of that Goſpel whereby we muſt ſtand or fall, it is not yet come within the terrors of Judgment, nor has made us liable to Death and Hell.

For the evil and danger of our *bodily deſires*, we muſt know, is the evil and danger of a *temptation*. When our *appetites deſire* what the prohibition has made *evil*, and our *Spirits* on the other ſide declare what the Commandment has made *good*: then is the time of *temptation* or tryal, whether our Wills are reſolved to ſtick to our *Luſts* or to our *Duty*, and whether they will prefer God

or

or Sin. And herein lies the great Danger of our natural Appetites; for although *in themselves they are not deadly and damning to any Man otherwise good*, yet are *they Traps and Snares to deadly and damning Sins.*

In *themselves*, I say, *to any Christian Man, who is otherwise good and vertuous, our natural Appetites are not deadly and damning.* The Lusting and Inclination of our *Flesh*, after *Meats*, and *Drinks*, and after *Ease*, and *Pleasures*; and the Lusting of the *Eye* after *Gain* and *Riches*, are not *absolutely* and *directly forbidden*, or in *themselves*, and before they have got any further, an *Article of our Condemnation.* No, all the Desires of the Flesh are naturally necessary, some to preserve our *own Persons*, and some to the *Preservation* and *Propagation of Mankind.* This God himself has made, and he allows of it. It is no Man's Sin to have a *Stomach to his Meat*, or to have *Desires after Ease*, and a *fleshly Inclination after bodily Pleasures:* Because God has so framed our Bodies that they should, and therefore he cannot be angry with us if we do desire them.

Indeed he has not left these Desires to their own Swing, but has put several Restraints upon them: He has bound them up from *some Objects*, and in *some degrees.* For we are forbid to desire and lust after *Meat* and *Drink*, *Ease* and *Pleasure*, *Riches* and *Plenty*, when either we are *injurious* to other Men in procuring that which we lust after, or when we are *excessive* and *intemperate* in the use of it, or for its sake *transgress any other Commandment.* Our *Desires of Meat* and *Drink*, for instance, must not carry us on to excessive Measures, in *Gluttony* and *Drunkenness*; our *carnal Lusts*, must not draw us on to act them with undue Objects, in *Fornication*, *Adultery*, *Rapes*, or other *prohibited uncleannesses*; and our *Desire of Money*, must not betray us into *Thefts* or *Robberies*, *Fraud* and *Circumvention*, *Extortion* and *Oppression*, *Niggardliness*, *Uncharitableness*, or other Sins whether against *Justice* or *Charity.* As on the other Side, our *Fears* and *Aversations* from *Want* or *Pain*, or other *bodily Evils*, must not induce us to *neglect a Commandment* that we may please our Flesh, or to *deny our Religion* for the securing of a bodily Enjoyment.

These Restraints God has laid upon our bodily Appetites, having given us these Commands, with several

others mentioned above, which we are oft-times tempted to tranſgreſs in order to the fulfilling of them. For our bodily Appetites themſelves, do not *diſtinguiſh*, either of *Objects*, or of *Degrees*. A Man's *Palate*, or his *Stomach*, in any delicious Meat or Drink which yields a Pleaſure to it, do not tell him when they have enough, or ceaſe deſiring before they are gone on to be intemperate. Our *Eyes* luſt after Money, but they conſider not whoſe it is; but ſo they may have it, they matter not to whom it belongs, or how they come by it: And ſo it is in our fleſhly Appetites of other things. For it is the natural Pleaſure of thoſe things which we luſt after, that moves our Bodies; and therefore they luſt after them ſo long, as they are pleaſed with them. They never ſtop at a fit Meaſure, or turn away from a forbidden Object; ſo that if we will be ruled by them, they will carry us on to any thing that agrees with them, whether it be *lawful* or *unlawful*, and ſo are ſure to inſnare us into ſin. And here indeed God has ſet a ſtrict Reſtraint upon them, and will puniſh them ſeverely if they go beyond it. For

Then, as I ſaid, our *Luſts are deadly to us, and Articles of our Condemnation, when they have damning Effects*, and *enſnare us into deadly and damning Sins*. To any good Man, the bare Luſts and deſires of Evil are not ſo truly a *damning Sin*, as a *dangerous Temptation*; they are not in themſelves an Article of Death to him, but they are apt to carry him on to that which is. For that which puts any Sin into a Capacity to tempt us, is our Luſt or Deſire of ſomething which is annexed to it, and which we hope to obtain by it. There is always ſomething that goes along with it, which is naturally fitted to pleaſe our Fleſh, and to excite a carnal Appetite; and by this we are tempted, and allured into the Practice and Commiſſion of it. For *bare* Sin could never tempt any Man, nor could any one in his Wits ever chuſe to diſobey for diſobedience ſake, without any thing further: becauſe there is no good in Tranſgreſſion nakedly conſidered, which ſhould move any Man's Will to chuſe and embrace it; but on the contrary, much evil that will diſſwade and affright him from it. For it deprives us of *God's Favour*, and *ſubjects us to his Vengeance*, and *fills us with ſad Hearts*, and *anxious* and *terrible Expectations*. But that which wins us over

over to a Liking and Approbation of it, is the Appearance of some *Pleasure*, *Profit*, *Honour*, or other annexed Allurement, which we expect to reap by it. It is one or other of these, that overcomes all our Fears, and inveagles us into the commission thereof; for they strike in with our natural Appetites, and raise in us Desires after it; and those prove the Bait which draws us in, and are the insnaring Temptation.

For herein lies all the *Force* of any *Temptation*: *The Satisfaction of a Lust is joyned with the Acting of a Sin, which is an Invitation to us, for the sake of the one, to commit the other also.* The Transgression has something annexed, which is agreeable to our fleshly Natures, and raises in us Desires of it, and Cravings after it; and when it has got this Hold of us, it draws us as much as we can be drawn by our Love or our own Lusts, and the Gratification of our bodily Appetites; which is indeed a great Step to our Choice and Commission of it, and a strong Temptation.

For this is the *natural Order* of our *Actions*; either our *Consciences*, or our *Passions*, *move* and *excite* us to them; and then our *Wills*, *chuse* and *intend* them; and, upon that Choice and Intention, our *Understandings contrive* and *direct*, and last of all our *bodily* and *executive Powers fulfil* and *perform them*. All our bodily Actions, are at the Choice and under the Command of our Wills, and all our Choice is upon the Appearance of some Good or other, which either our Consciences, or our fleshly Lusts and Appetites propose to us. For our Wills, we must remember, are placed in a middle State, and are canvased and beset on both Sides, our Lusts being urgent with us to consent to one thing, and our Consciences to another. And this is that *Strife betwixt the Flesh and Spirit*, which is mentioned in the Scriptures; and that Contention which St. *Paul* describes in the 7th Chapter to the *Romans*, between the *Law of Lust in the Members*, and the *Law of God in the Mind*. These *two* Principles, our *Body* and *Spirit*, or our *Lusts* and our *Consciences*, are those great Interests that vie and struggle in us, and emulously contend which shall obtain the Consent and Choice of the Will of Man. And whensoever either of them has got that, our Actions follow in Course. For our bodily Members move at our

own Choice ; and therefore if our Luſts after the Pleaſures of Sin have once prevailed upon our Wills to conſent to it, they have gained their Point, and we ſhall go on without more ado to act and commit it.

In this then lies all the Force of a Temptation, that the Sin which we are tempted to, has ſomething annexed to it wherein our Fleſh is delighted, and which it luſts after and deſires, for the ſake of that Pleaſure which it finds in it. And when by this means any Sin has got our fleſhly Love and Deſire, it has got a powerful Friend in our own Boſoms. For our Luſts are ſtrong and violent, and where they ſet upon a thing, they will not eaſily be denied, but are urgent and importunate with our Wills, to conſent to the Gratification and fulfilling of them. So that if once any Sin has ſtruck in with them, it is able to try its Strength, and contend with the Law of God in the Mind ; being furniſhed now with a powerful Bait, and a ſtrong temptation.

Thus are our Luſts and Deſires of forbidden things, not the forbidden Sin it ſelf, but the Temptation to it ; ſo that in bare luſting or deſiring of them, we do not commit the damning Sins themſelves, but are tempted only to their Commiſſion. And in this St. *James* is moſt expreſs ; for *then*, ſays he, *every Man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own Luſts, and enticed* to evil by them, *Jam.* 1. 14.

And as for *meer Temptation* to a damning Sin, it is not deadly and damning. For our being tempted to Sin, is not a renouncing of our Lord, but an Exerciſe of our Service and Obedience to him, and a tryal whether or no we will renounce him. It is the great Proof and Argument, how dearly we love him, and how cloſely and faithfully our Wills adhere to him. It ſhews how Obedience is uppermoſt in our Hearts, and that we will rather deny our deareſt Luſts and importunate Deſires than venture, for their ſakes, to offend him. So that to be tempted is no inſtance of damning Diſobedience, but a plain Proof how much we will loſe and ſuffer rather than we will diſobey. It is a Tryal of us how we prefer God and our Duty before other things, even thoſe that are moſt dear to us of all things in the World beſides. We do not ſin damnably then in being tempted,

ted, so long as we consent not to it, but manfully resist and overcome the Temptation.

And this is evident from hence, because those very men, who had lived most free from sin, have not for all that lived free from temptation. Even *Adam* himself, before he knew what sin was, and during his state of Innocence, was liable to be tempted. For the Tree of *Knowledge of good and evil*, whereof God had forbidden him to eat, was alluring to his eyes, and an incentive to his lust, as well as any other Tree of the Garden. And because it was so, the Woman was wont to eat of it through the strength of such desire after it, notwithstanding God had commanded her to abstain from it, *The woman saw, that the Tree was good for food, and pleasant to the eye, and she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat*, and by the same inducement she drew in her Husband, and *gave it unto him, and he did eat* also, *Gen.* 3. 6. And the second *Adam*, who was most entirely innocent and guilty of no sort of (*a*) sin, was yet liable to temptation like as we are, being *in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin*, Heb. 4. 15. Nay, says the Apostles, it was necessary that he should be so; that by what he felt in himself, he might the better know how to shew mercy and have compassion upon us. *In all things*, says he, *it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful* as well as a *faithful High Priest*; *for in that he himself hath suffer'd being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted*, Heb. 2. 17, 18.

(*a*) 1 Pet. 2. 22. Joh. 14. 30.

As for our being tempted then, or invited to any sin by our bare Lusts and Inclinations after it; in it self, and before it has got any further, it is no deadly sin or damnable transgression. It is the scene of good endeavour, the tryal of obedience, a test of our great love and preference of God and his Law before all the world besides, yea even before our own deareſt lusts, and our own selves. It is nothing more than befel *Adam* before he had sinned, or than befel Christ who never knew sin; and therefore in it self, bare lust and desire, or being tempted and invited to sin, cannot be damnably sinful.

As for our Lusts or Temptations, 'tis true they differ in degrees, according as our desires of that evil which we are tempted to, are indulged, and have advanced more or less. For sometimes a lust may stir, but as soon

as ever it is *obſerved* it is *again extinguiſhed*. The Pleaſure of the Sin, whether by being ſeen or fanſied, raiſes in us a ſudden Thought or Deſire after it; but the Luſt is expelled, and the fancy is turned away from the evil thing, as ſoon as it is diſcovered; it is not ſuffered to remain and dwell in us, but is preſently thrown out with Indignation. And this is a Power over our own Deſires, and a way of breaking the Strength of Temptation, which is incident only to *grown Men* and to *perfect Chriſtians*: And that not in all Inſtances of Temptation, but only in ſuch as are not *extraordinary in themſelves*, and which have been *often vanquiſhed* and *triumphed* over. It is in ſuch Caſes where Uſe has made the Conqueſt eaſie, and long Cuſtom of ceaſing and turning away from the inveigling Deſire, has taken off all the Difficulty; ſo that now we are able to ſilence and ſubdue the luſt, as ſoon as we diſcern it. And as for theſe feeble Deſires and impotent Temptations, there is no queſtion but that a good Chriſtian may be under them, and yet be in no danger of being condemned for them.

But then at other Times, our *Luſts live longer*, and *advance higher*: They grow up to good degrees, till they are able to contend and ſtrive againſt our Mind and Conſcience: ſo that even when at laſt they are denied, and our Wills chuſe to do what God commands us in ſpite of them, yet is that after much ſtruggling and oppoſition. The Fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, as well as the Spirit luſteth againſt the Fleſh: and although at laſt the fleſhly Luſts are overpower'd, and cannot prevail with our Wills to chuſe on their Side; yet do they ſtrive hard and contend for it. And here a luſt is not preſently ſubdued as ſoon as it is diſcerned, but it ſtrives and ſtruggles; it can make Head againſt the Law in the Mind, although it cannot overcome it; it has ſome Intereſt in the Will, although it have not an Intereſt ſufficient; for the Will hearkens to it for ſome Time, and conſiders of what it offers, notwithſtanding at laſt it rejects its Suit, and through the ſolicitations of a more powerful Favourite, reſolves againſt it. And this Power our Luſts have in us whilſt we are *young Converts*, and of a more *imperfect Goodneſs*; nay, in ſome very *great Temptations* indeed, ſuch as are the *fear of Death* and *bodily Torments* eſpecially, they will ſtruggle thus in thoſe, who are the moſt *perfect* Chriſtians of all.

But

But now when our Lusts are in this degree, so as to stay upon our Souls for some time, and to strive against our Spirits for the Consent of our Wills before they are finally denied it: yet if they go no further than bare Lust, and our Wills do not after all their struggling *consent* to them, or chuse the evil thing which is craved by them, they are still uncondemning, and incident to an Heir of Salvation. And this, as I take it, is clear, from what St. *Paul* himself says of the truly *regenerate*, or of those who, in his Words, *walk in the Spirit*. For in them he says plainly, that the *Flesh lusteth against the Spirit*, albeit it is not able to *prevail over* it: *The Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh; so that* even in fulfilling the Will of the Spirit, you contradict another Will of your Lusts, and *cannot do*, (*b*) or do not *the things that you would*, Gal. 5. 16, 17.

(*b*) μὴ ποιῆτε.

Nay, even *Christ* himself, who knew no Sin, nor ever committed any thing which could in strict Justice be worthy of Death; was yet subject to such a Conflict of Flesh and Spirit, as this now mentioned. His very *Death* and *Passion*, which was the *very* (*c*) *Consummation* and *highest part of his Obedience*, was not without great struggling of his Flesh, and a long and earnest Conflict of his bodily Desires against it. For he was in a *strange Fear* and *Discomposure* about it; *he began*, says St. *Mark*, *to be sore amazed*, Mark 14. 34. And when he had recovered himself a little from the Maze of that sudden Fright, he *prays* against it------*O my Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me*, Matt. 26. 39. And when his Request was not granted at first, he makes a fresh Address, wherein he is more *importunate----being in his Agony*, says St. *Luke*, *he prayed more earnestly*, Luke 22. 44. *his supplications he offered up, with strong crying and tears*, Heb. 5. 7. All this Strife and Opposition did the Desire of Life, and the bodily Appetite after Ease and safety, together with the Sense of God's Wrath and high Displeasure, raise in him against his Obedience of his Sufferings. But because all this was only carnal Desire, which although it lasted some time, and discomposed him much, was not yet able to gain any thing of his Will and (*d*) Consent to the refusal of his Duty; therefore notwithstanding it, he was perfectly innocent. All that can be said is, That he was tempted by the Desires of his

(*c*) Phil. 2. 8.

(*d*) Matth. 26. 39, 42.

Fleſh againſt this great and laſt Inſtance of Obedience; but he did not yield, or conſent to the Temptation.

Thus then, as for the Luſts and Deſires of our Fleſh, whether they be ſuddenly rejected and make no Reſiſtance, or are longer lived and contend much; yet if they have got no conſent of our Wills to the fulfilling of them, nor any Choice or Performance of the evil Thing or Action which is craved by them (as thoſe have not which are the Complaint and Fear of good Men) they are only a Temptation to a damning Sin, but in themſelves thus far they are not damning.

And having ſhewn thus, *for what Luſts and Deſires of Evil, we ſhall at the laſt day be pardoned*; I come now,

2. To ſhew *for which of them we ſhall be condemned.*

And as for this, we have in great part our anſwer to it already. For our *Luſts are then damnable and dangerouſly evil, when they are effectual Inſtruments and Temptations to damning Evils, and carry us on, either to chuſe, or practiſe them.* For they are the great Favourites and Seducers of our Wills, and thereby the Authors of our Actions: They firſt bring us to chuſe and conſent to the deadly Sin whereby they are gratified, and then to act it; and when they are gone on to either of theſe, they are an Article of our Condemnation. They are uncondemning till they come ſo far, but if once they have got us to *conſent to the alluring Sin, from that Conſent begins their Sting*, and both it, and all that follow it, makes us liable to eternal Deſtruction.

To make this Diſcourſe more clear, I will here ſet down thoſe *ſeveral Steps* whereby we aſcend to the completion, and are carried on to the working and commiſſion of any Sin.

1. At the *Repreſentation* of the Object which is to tempt us thereto, whether it be an *unchaſt Embrace*, an *unlawful Gain*, or the like, either by what we *feel of* it now if it be before our *Senſes*, or by what we *fanſie* if it is in our *Imagination*, our *Fleſh is pleaſed* and *delighted* with it. And from this *Pleaſure*, it naturally goes on to *Love*, and from *loving deſire* it. And *Deſire* or *Luſt*, is the *laſt Step* among the Paſſions; for *Delight* begets Love, and *Love* ends in *Deſire*: but when once we are come to deſire a thing, our Paſſions have done their Part, and all that in them lies toward ? the Actions.

2. When

2. When in the *appetite* or *animal Soul* the ſin has gone thus far, the next ſtep is, that, to gratifie this deſire or luſt of our Fleſh, our *wills* ſhould conſent to it. For our Wills are the Diſpoſers of all that follows, ſo that unleſs they conſent to get that which the Fleſh ſo much deſires, there can nothing more be done towards it. But if they do *conſent to the deſire*, and *intend to fulfil it*; then,

3. Our *underſtanding* and *contrivance* is employed, in *deliberating* and *conſulting*, *what time*, *what place*, *what means* are fitteſt to accompliſh it with the leaſt difficulty, and the moſt delight, and, to the greateſt advantage. And when our minds have ſeen which to preferr and fix upon; then,

4. Our *wills reſolve upon them*, and make *choice of them*. And when this is done, the laſt *Decree is paſt*, and all the time of *doubting* and *deliberation* is over; ſo that nothing more remains, but,

5. To apply our *bodily powers to perform our reſolutions*, in the execution and commiſſion of that, which was reſolved upon.

This is the natural order of our faculties, and the proceſs that is obſerved by our principles of action, in their completion and final commiſſion of any ſin. The firſt beginning is in the *lower Soul*, for that is the inlet of all ſin, and the ſeat of temptation; and there it is that ſin hath all its ſtrength and inſnaring power, upon which account it is called by St. *Paul* a *Law in the members*, Rom. 7. 27. And when theſe Luſts of our Fleſh have won the *conſent of our wills*, they are ſecure of all our after-contrivances for it, and of our actual performance and execution of it. For both our thoughts and our bodily powers, are at the Command of our own Wills; ſo that if at the inſtigation of our Luſts, our Wills have once conſented to the ſin, they will quickly ſet our heads a-work to contrive for it, and our hands and other bodily powers to execute and fulfil it.

And in this method our Principles of action move, when we act with *full deliberation*, and when they are *all employed*. Sometimes, indeed, there is no *contrivance* at all, becauſe none is needful; as it happens when the opportunity of the ſin is preſent with us, and juſt before us at ſuch time as we conſent to it; ſo that nothing more

more is wanting, but only to act and fulfil it. But when the opportunity is abſent, and we are put to forecaſt and contrive for it; then is the proceſs of our Faculties in that order, which I have here deſcribed.

For an inſtance and illuſtration of this, we will take the ſin of *Drunkenneſs*, and the proceſs will appear to be as I have mentioned. For in a man whoſe inclination that way diſpoſes him to be tempted by it, the *fancy* of it in himſelf, or the having it ſuggeſted to him by another, gives him a *thought* of the *pleaſure* which accompanies it; and from that apprehenſion of its pleaſurableneſs, he begins to *love*; and from that love he goes on ſtraightway to *deſire* it. And now his *will* being ſollicited by his luſt or bodily deſiring, *conſents* to the fulfilling of it. And this conſent being once gained, the next thing in order is, to *deliberate*, and *contrive*, *what company*, *what time*, and *what place* are fitteſt for it. And when, by comparing all things together, he comes to make a judgment of that, he immediately *chuſes* and *reſolves* upon it; and that being done, there is nothing remaining further, but to *execute* what he has reſolved, and go on to the performance thereof.

This then is the method and progreſs, from our luſting and deſire of any thing that is evil, to our acting and committing it. It begins in *delight*, and *love*, and *deſire*; and thence goes on to our *conſenting* to it, to our *contrivance* for it, to our *reſolutions* upon it, and after all theſe to our *practice* and *performance* of it.

Now ſo long as the evil is entertained only in a *ſhort delightſome thought*, or *love*, or *deſire*, and reſts *there*, but goes no *further*, it is not ſo much our *damning ſin*, as our *dangerous temptation*; it will be connived at, and at the laſt Day we ſhall not be condemned for it. For thus far the ſin is only ſolliciting our choice, but has not got it; and as yet we have not committed a mortal crime, but are only under a tryal, whether we will be drawn to the commiſſion of it, or no. But if once our wills *conſent to it*, then begins the ſting, and there the danger enters; for the luſting after evil ſo far as to *conſent* to it, and much more ſo as to *contrive* for it, or to *fulfil* it, makes us liable to death and eternal condemnation. For our *own choice*, as we heard above, *makes any ſin damning*; ſo that if by means of the tempting luſt any Sin has prevailed

ſo

ſo far, it is become a deadly offence, and ſubjects us to deſtruction. *Luſt*, ſays St. *James*, *when it has conceived*, or is imperfectly conſented to, anſwering to conception, which is an imperfect formation, *bringeth forth ſin*; *and ſin, when* by being perfectly conſented to, *it is finiſhed, bringeth forth death*, which is the wages of it, *Jam.* 1. 15.

And that our luſts after any ſin, are then damnably ſinful, when they are gone *beyond* deſire, and are come on either to our *conſent* or *contrivance*, or actual *performance*, appears further from theſe inſtances in them all *three*.

If we luſt ſo long after any evil thing, as to *conſent to the ſinful enjoyment of it*, we are guilty of all that puniſhment which is threatned to it. *He that looks upon a Woman*, ſays our Saviour, ſo long as *to luſt after her*, or to * conſent in his heart to the enjoyment of her, *he hath committed adultry with her already in his heart*, Matt. 5. 28.

* *Juxta Domini noſtri Dictum, Qui Mulierem viderit ad concupiſcendum, reus eſt Adulterii corde concepti: intelligere poſſumus, quod & ſi res turpes & damnabiles non agimus, pro ipsâ tamen rerum turpium voluntate damnamur.* Sal. de. Prov. lib. 6. p. 205. Ed. Oxon.

If we luſt ſo long, as to *contrive for it*, which is a degree further; we are more guilty of the ſin, and more liable to the puniſhment of it ſtill. The *Machinations* and contrivances of *Murder*, as was obſerved above, are reckoned among thoſe things which *pollute a man* (and thereby unfit him for entring into Heaven, where nothing can ever have admittance that is unclean) as well as *Murder* it ſelf is, *Matt.* 15. 19.

But if our luſt after any ſinful enjoyment carry us on, not only to *conſent to it*, or to *contrive for it*, but, what is the perfection of all, to *work* and *fulfil* it; then has it enſnared us into as much miſchief as it can, and is become *dangerous* and *damning* with a witneſs. For then it has prevailed with us, to compleat our ſin, and give the laſt hand to it: has brought us under that which is moſt of all threatned; for now we *fulfil the luſts of the Fleſh*, Gal. 5. 16, 19. *we work iniquity*, Matt. 7. 23.

And if we continue to do this, not only for *once* or *twice*, but in *conſtant returns*, and in a *fixt courſe* and

tenure

tenure of action; then as our *ſin is grown higher*, (the Acts thereof being more numerous, and the guilt more crying) ſo will our puniſhment alſo be more *dreadfully ſevere*. And this is called, *walking after the fleſh*, 2 Pet. 2. 10. and *living after the fleſh*, Rom. 8. 13. And this being a *ſtate of waſted vertue*, and *habitual reigning ſin*, it is not only, through its obnoxiouſneſs to puniſhment, a *ſtate of death*; but alſo, through its hardneſs of cure and difficult recovery, a ſtate of *great doubt* and *danger* likewiſe.

* *Balſamon* and *Zonaras* note *from the Fathers*, theſe four Steps in Sin, *viz.* προσβολω, &c. i. e. *The firſt motion or impreſſion, the conflict betwixt Conſcience and Appetite, the aſſent of the Mind, and the act it ſelf. Whereof the two former are not liable to puniſhment, neither the firſt impreſſion nor luctation, being condemned, if Reaſon which conflicts therewith rejects the Thought. But the two latter are, the aſſent being tryable, and the Action puniſhable.* Balſ. & Zon. in Can. 4. Conc. Neo-cæſ.

So that as for all theſe *further degrees*, * from the *conſent of our wills, onward*; if our Luſt after ſin have gone on to them, they are deadly and damning. For the ſame *Law in the members* which *wars againſt the Law of the mind*, ſo as thus to captivate and triumph over it, is, as the *Law of ſin*, ſo, as the apoſtles ſays, the *Law of death* too, *Rom.* 7. 23, 24.

All our Luſtings after evil therefore, when once they come to be conſented to, although before they were connived at, are thenceforth deadly and damning. So that whoſoever hopes to be ſaved at the laſt Day from the puniſhment of them, muſt thus far mortifie and kill them: *Mortifie*, ſays St. *Paul*, *thoſe deſires, which are ſeated in your earthly members*, Col. 3. 5. for it is only *if you through the ſpirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, that you ſhall live*, Rom. 8. 13. As to theſe *damnable degrees*, all fleſhly Luſts muſt of neceſſity be crucified in all *good Chriſtian men*; for no man will be reputed to *belong to Chriſt*, till this change is wrought in him. *They that are Chriſts*, ſays the ſame Apoſtle, *have crucified the fleſh with the affections and luſts*, Gal. 5. 24.

Mortifie and *crucifie* them, I ſay, we muſt not ſo as to have *no fleſhly appetites* and *bodily deſires of evil*; for then, muſt we have *no bodily deſires at all*. Becauſe our Luſts themſelves, as was obſerved, do not diſtinguiſh of *lawful* or *unlawful*, but are naturally moved by an agreeable

able object, whether it be with *God* or *against him.* But we must mortifie them to that *degree*, as that they never be *able to win us over, to consent to any forbidden thing for their gratification.* They must never have so much interest in our Hearts, as to make us preferr them before our duty, and chuse to perform what *they* bid us, rather than what *God* doth. Some stirrings and *ineffective motions* of them, which cannot prevail against God, nor gain over the consent of our Wills to any thing that he has forbidden, are dispensed withal; they are the stage of temptation, but not of death; for God bears with them, and the mortified men themselves do daily feel and labour under them. But it is the *prevailing strength* of our Lusts after evil things, when they get our consent to them, and carry us on to transgress God's Laws to fulfil them: This conquering power of fleshly lusts, I say, is that which is to be mortified in every good man, because under this strength and empire of them he cannot go to Heaven.

And that no *good man* may call in question the safety of his state, from any needless fears about this *mortification*; this we must know every man has done, in *his conversion to become a good Christian.* For before he can be such, he has killed the reigning power of Lust, so as not to be acted any longer by its instigation. He feels some small stirrings of it afterwards, indeed; but they do not win upon him, or prevail over him; for he is always ready to deny the satisfaction of his Lust, before he will displease his God; and makes all the desires of his flesh, to give way to the dictates of his Conscience. *Ye that are Christs*, saith St. *Paul, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts*, Gal. 5. 24.

And when this is *once* done, there is no *great trouble* in it *afterwards*: for the more any man is *accustomed to obey*, the less difficulty doth he find in *mortification* and *self-denial*, and in restraining of all those Lusts which tempt to disobedience. He is not now in every temptation, put to the pain and trouble, of *cutting off a right-hand*, or of *plucking out a right-eye*; the self-denial and mortification went so near him at first, 'tis true; but since he has been used to it, and his flesh is accustomed to bear the Yoke, there are no such pangs and uneasiness attending it. So that if he is not now still upon the

severe

ſevere task of *painful mortification*, it is becauſe he doth not need it, ſince it is done already to his hand. His Luſts are ſo far mortified, as it is abſolutely neceſſary they ſhould be; they are crucified to that degree, as to be diſabled from gaining his *conſent to them*, his *contrivance for them*, or his *fulfilling* and *performance of them*, and that is as much mortification as God will exact of him.

But yet when this is done, and our Luſts are mortified to this degree, there is *ſtill need of a watchful care over them*, and *of a continual ſtrife againſt them, leſt they ſhould rebel again and go further*. For the objects of ſenſe, and the allurements of our fleſh, are ſtill before us; and our Bodies naturally are ſtill as capable to be delighted in them, and thereupon to luſt and long after them, as ever they were before. It is only the overpowering ſtrength of the Law in the mind or conſcience, which maintains the reſolution of our Wills againſt them, and by that means keep them under. And therefore if once we begin to ſlacken our care, and to keep no hank upon them, but to allow them to go where, and how far they pleaſe; they will quickly grow upon us, and prove too hard for us, and bring us firſt to conſent to them, and after that to compleat and fulfil them.

Let no man therefore *indulge to the thoughts of unlawful pleaſures*, and by the delights of his fancy, foment and cheriſh the Luſts and Deſires of his Fleſh; preſuming that all is ſafe, whilſt he doth not conſent to them, nor yields to fulfil them. For admitting that all things elſe are innocent and uncondemning, yet however by this means he lays a Snare for his own Soul. For he throws himſelf into temptation, and ſo cannot expect that God ſhould deliver him out of it. God has promiſed to relieve us indeed, in all neceſſities of his own making; and if his *Providence throws us upon his trial, his Grace ſhall ſupport us under it*, and make a way for our eſcape out of it. *He will not ſuffer you to be tempted above what you are able*, ſaith the apoſtle, *but*, together with the temptation, he *will make a way to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear* ſo much of *it* as befalls you, 1 *Cor.* 10. 10. But what is this to us, if we bring our ſelves into ſnares, and prove our own tempters? For there is no reaſon at all to preſume,

ſume, that God, if he will deliver us from other Enemies, ſhould deliver us alſo from our own ſelves; and that he ſhould ſecure us by his Spirit, from thoſe very ſnares, which we lay for our own Vertue. No, if we will entertain Serpents in our boſoms, he has no where engaged, nor is there any reaſon why he ſhould, that we ſhall not be ſtung by them. But on the contrary, he warns us againſt them, and bids us be careful to keep off from them. Yea, ſo far muſt we be from bringing temptations upon our ſelves, that, if we will obſerve his Orders, we muſt pray daily even againſt thoſe, whereto his Providence might expoſe us. This being one of thoſe Petitions, which, according to our Lord's appointment, we are to put up to God as often as we do that for our daily Bread, *viz.* That *he would not lead us into temptation*, Matth. 6. 13.

So that if by indulging to delightſome Fancies, and growing luſts of evil, we throw our ſelves into a great temptation, we have juſt reaſon to fear, leſt God, for our puniſhment, ſhould leave us in it, and ſuffer us damnably to fall by it. Such indulgence, is apt of *it ſelf* to inflame our Luſts, and to weaken our reſolutions; and God is alſo prone to withdraw his Grace, and to leave us to our our own ſtrength upon it; and ſince at the ſame time it *increaſes our neceſſities*, and *withdraws our aids*, it muſt needs put us into a dangerous condition. If then we would ſecure our Souls, and keep off from damning ſins; we muſt reſiſt temptations at the beginning, and not give way to them; we muſt not cheriſh and indulge, but timely check, and heedfully ſuppreſs them.

And thus at laſt we ſee, what is the juſt force of this firſt cauſe of fear to honeſt minds, their *ineffective luſts*, and *impotent deſires of evil*. The *firſt beginnings of luſt cannot be avoided, and the longer entertainment of it ſhall not finally be puniſhed, if it is ſoon checked by us; nay, if it ſtays longer and contends much with us, ſo long as it doth not prevail upon us to conſent to, and fulfil the ſin, whereto it is a temptation*: But *when once it has gained our conſent and choice of that ſin, whereto it would engage us, then is it of a damning ſtain, and all its following effects are mortal.* All which S. *James* inſinuates to us in that account which he gives us of the progreſs and production

ction of ſin, which he ſets down from the *motive* or *firſt temptation*, to the *perfect birth* or *compleat production*, in this order: *Then*, ſays he, *every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own luſts, and inticed* to evil by them. This luſt or deſire of evil is only the firſt ſtep, being as yet not grown up to the ſtature of ſin, but only to that of temptation. But when it advances, and draws in our other Faculties, then ſin begins, and ripens; it is firſt conceived, and then finiſhed, and after the finiſhing of it, it is a matter of condemnation, although before it were uncondemning. For *then when luſt hath conceived*, by being in ſome imperfect meaſure willed and conſented to, *it bringeth forth*, anſwerable to its conception, which is but an imperfect ſort of production, an imperfect Embryo of *ſin*; *and* this Embryo of *ſin*, *when* by a full choice and perfect conſent, and much more when by action and practice, *it is finiſhed*, *bringeth forth* its proper wages, *Death*, Jam. 1. 14, 15.

Although theſe luſtings and deſires therefore, which good men complain of, may juſtly be an employment of their *watchfulneſs* and *care*; yet ought they not to be a cauſe of their *fear* or *ſcruple*. For it ſhall not bring upon them thoſe evils which they are afraid of, nor ever prove their ruin and deſtruction. The evil thing is entertained only in a thought, or a wiſh; they luſt after it, and are tempted by it; but that is all, for they do not conſent to the Temptation. And ſince their Luſts go no further than thus, they ſhall not harm them when Chriſt comes to Judgment, nor ever bring them into condemnation.

CHAP. V.

Of two other Cauſes of groundleſs Scruples to good Souls.

ANother thing which diſquiets the hearts of good and honeſt men, and makes them needleſly to call in queſtion the ſaveableneſs of their preſent ſtate, and their title to ſalvation, is the *coldneſs* and *unaffectedneſs*, the *unſettledneſs*

neſs and *diſtractions, which they find in themſelves when they are at prayers.* Good People are wont to cry out of *deſertions*, to think that God has thrown them off, and that his Spirit has forſaken them, if at any time they find a great diſtraction and dulneſs of Spirit in their devotions, and a great abatement of that zeal and fervency, that fixedneſs and attention, which they have happily enjoyed at other times.

But this is a great miſtake, from mens ignorance of *God's Laws*, and of their *own ſelves.* For God has no where told them, that he will judge them at the laſt day, by the *ſteadineſs* and *fixedneſs*, the *tide* and *fervency of their devotions*; but by the *integrity of their hearts*, and the *uprightneſs of their obedience.* The laſt Sentence ſhall not paſs upon men, according to the heat of their affections; but according to the goodneſs of their lives. So that if they have been careful to practiſe *all God's Commandments* according to their power and opportunities, and this of *Prayer*, among the reſt, in ſuch ſort as their unavoidable infirmities would ſuffer them, they ſhall be ſafe in that Judgment, notwithſtanding any inequality in their bodily tempers, or unconſtancy and abatement in their bodily affections.

To ſtate this buſineſs ſo, as that we may neither be *unneceſſarily ſcrupulous* about theſe qualifications of our Prayers when we *cannot*; nor, on the other ſide, *irreligiouſly careleſs* of them, when we might enjoy them, I ſhall ſay ſomething of their *neceſſity* when they can be had, as well as of that *allowance* which God will make to them, when, through any *bodily indiſpoſitions*, or *unforeſeen accidents*, they cannot.

If we would put up our Prayers to God in ſuch manner, as it is fit for *us* to offer them in, or for *him* to hear them, we muſt make them with a *due fixedneſs* and *attention of mind*, and *fervency of affection.*

We muſt offer them up, with a due *fixedneſs* and *attention of mind.* Our thoughts muſt go along with our lips, and our ſouls muſt be intent upon the buſineſs which we are about, when we are making our Prayers to God. We muſt not expect that he ſhould mind thoſe vain words, and mere talk, which we do not; or that he ſhould hear us, when we do not hear our ſelves: No, it is the work of the Soul, and not the bare labour of the lips, which

he attends to; ſo that if only our Tongues pray, but our Minds are ſtraying, this is as good as no Prayer at all.

We muſt offer them up alſo, with much *earneſtneſs of deſire*, and *fervency of affection*. We muſt ſhew that we put a price upon a mercy, before we are fit to receive it; for otherwiſe there is no aſſurance that we ſhall be duly thankful for it. We muſt not ſeem cold, and indifferent after it, for that is a ſign that we can almoſt be as well content without it. But we muſt be eager in our deſire, and expreſs a fervency of affection for the ſame, ſuch as we are wont to uſe in the purſuit of any thing which we greatly value: and this is an inducement for God to give us that, which he ſees we ſo dearly love; it ſets a price upon his Bleſſings, and ſhews the meaſure of our own vertuous inclinations, and therefore he will encourage and reward it. *The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man*, ſays St. *James*, *availeth much*, Jam. 5. 16.

Thus are a due attention of mind, and a fervent heat of deſire in devotion, ſuch qualifications, as are neceſſary to render our Prayers becoming either us to offer, or God to hear; ſo that we muſt always ſtrive, and, according to our *power* and *preſent circumſtances*, endeavour after them. We muſt take care, as much as we can, to *compoſe our thoughts* when we pray, *to draw them off from other things* for ſome time before, and ſtill to bring them back again when at any time we find them wandring. And we muſt endeavour alſo by a due ſenſe of the *neceſſity*, the *greatneſs*, and *undeſervedneſs of God's mercies*, to *heighten our affections*, and make them bend vigorouſly and eagerly after thoſe things which we pray for; that ſo God ſeeing we are *ſerious* and in *earneſt* with him, he may be induced to grant thoſe benefits which we deſire of him.

But then, in theſe, as in all other Duties, we are bound to them ſo far only, as they may come under the power and choice of our own Wills. And, on the other hand, after all our care and pains in fixing of our thoughts, and raiſing of our deſires in Prayer, through ſome bodily indiſpoſition or unforeſeen accidents, which we cannot help, our minds ſometimes will ſtill run aſtray, and our deſires will be cold and languid. And then this

unwill'd

unwill'd dulneſs and *diſtraction, ſhall not influence our main ſtate*, more than our other unwill'd failures do; it is a thing which we cannot help, and no man living is perfectly free from it, and therefore God will not be ſevere upon it, but in great mercy he will pity and connive at it.

For as for the *attention of our minds*, and the *fixedneſs of our thoughts*, either in *Prayer*, or in any *other* buſineſs; it is a thing, which is not always in our own power, but may be hindred and interrupted by many accidents, whether we will or no. For any thing, that makes our *bodily ſpirits tumultuary* and *reſtleſs*, diſturbs and breaks our *attention*. Any *high motion of our blood*, or any *former impreſſion upon our ſpirits*, either by our *precedent ſtudies*, or our *crowd of buſineſs*, will make great variety of thoughts and roving fancies to obtrude themſelves upon us; and this is our natural frame and conſtitution, which we muſt ſubmit to, and can never wholly remedy. We can no more prevent it, than we can prevent our *dreams*, when our fancies are ſtruck by like impreſſions. For from the *natural union of our Souls and Bodies*, our *Minds*, in their moſt *ſpiritual* operations of *thinking* and *underſtanding*, go along with our *bodily ſpirits*, and apprehend after their impreſſions; and we can as well refuſe to *ſee when our Eyes are open*, or to *taſte what is put into our mouths*, as we can refuſe to have a *thought of thoſe things, which are impreſſed upon our bodily fancy or imagination*. The connexion betwixt theſe, is neceſſary and natural; and there is no breaking, or avoiding it. So that let us be either at our Prayers, or at any other exercise, if any temper of our Bodies, any accidental motion of our Blood, any former impreſſions of foregoing ſtudies or other buſineſs ſtir in our fancies; our thoughts muſt needs be diverted, and our attention diſturbed by them.

Nay, in our Prayers we are more apt to find it thus, than in any other thing. For, beſides that in theſe the Adverſary is more buſie with us, therein men oft-times uſe *violence*, and ſcrew up the fixedneſs of their minds, and the fervency of their hearts, to the higheſt pitch. And then their bodily Spirits, being overſtrained, are liable, not only to be diſcompoſed by outward accidents, but alſo to give back and fall of themſelves;

and when in this manner they withdraw, there is room made, till they can be recollected again, for other thoughts to ariſe inſtead of them.

Indeed we may, and ought to ſtrive againſt theſe diſtractions as much as we can, and to compoſe our thoughts as much as our natural temper, or our preſent circumſtances will ſuffer us. When they wander in our Prayers, as ſoon as we diſcern it, we may recollect them; and when other thoughts intrude, as ſoon as they are obſerved we may reject them. But then this is all that we can do, or that God requires we ſhould do; for we cannot pray perfectly and continuedly without them. And then, as for the *zeal* and *fervency of our affections*, whether in our Prayers, or in any thing elſe, they are *various* and *very changeable*, and do not depend ſo much upon the *choice of our wills*, as upon the *temper of our bodies*. Some, upon every occaſion, are more *warm* and *eager in their paſſions*, either of *love* or *hatred*, *hopes* or *fears*, *joy* or *ſorrow*, than other men either are, or can be: For there is a difference in *tempers*, as well as in *palates*; and mens *paſſions* do no more iſſue out upon the ſame things, in the ſame eagerneſs, than their *ſtomachs* do after the ſame food, with the ſame degrees of appetite. So that as for a *great fervency*, and a *vehement affection*, every man cannot work himſelf up to it, becauſe all tempers do not admit of it. It is more a mans *temper*, than his *choice*; and therefore it is not to be expected that all people ſhould be able to raiſe themſelves up to a tranſporting pitch therein; but only that they ſhould, who are born to it.

Nay, even they whoſe *natural temper* fits them for a *great fervency* and a *high affection*, are not able to work themſelves up to it at *all times*. For no mans temper is *conſtant*, and *unchangeable*; ſeeing our very bodies are ſubject to a thouſand alterations, either from *things within* us, or from others that are *without us*. If a mans *blood* is put into an *irregular ferment*, either by a *cold air*, or an *inward diſtemper*; or any *diſcompoſing accident*; it ſpoils, not only the fixedneſs of his thoughts, but the zeal of his affections likewiſe. And let there be any damp or diſorder, any dulneſs or indiſpoſition, either upon a man's blood or ſpirits; and the diſcompoſure of his body is preſently felt in his Soul, for his thoughts flag, and his paſſions run

run low, and all his Powers are under a Cloud, and suffer an Abatement. And this every Man finds in himself, when he labours under a *sickly* and *crazy Temper*, an *aking or a cloudy Head*, or any other *bodily Indisposition*. For our Passions are bodily Powers, and are performed altogether by bodily Instruments; they live and die with them, and are subject to all their Coolings and Abatements, their Changes and Alterations. And therefore as long as our bodily Tempers and Dispositions alter, and, by reason of a number of Accidents, are still changeable and unconstant; the Zeal and Fervency of our Affections must needs be so too.

Thus is some Distraction of Mind, and Chilness of Affection, either in our Prayers, or in pursuit of any other thing, most necessarily incident to all Men. We cannot wholly prevent them, or live altogether free from them; but sometimes they will break in, and seize upon us, do what we can.

And since we cannot help them, God will not be always angry, or eternally torment us for them. That which offends him, and endangers us, as I have shewn, not being any unwill'd Weakness, but only the ill Choice or Faultiness of our own Wills, so that his Love and Favour to us will not alter, as our unsettled Thoughts, or Bodily Tempers do. And according to the Circumstances and Indispositions which at present we lie under, we are careful to be as fervent and affectionate as we can, and to recal our Thoughts when we observe them wandring; we need not doubt, but what ever *involuntary* distractions there may be sometimes in our Thoughts, or Abatements in our bodily Tempers, whilst we are at our Prayers, we shall be still accepted by him.

We shall be accepted, I say, and the Blessings which we sue for obtained, although sometimes our Prayers are less attent, and less affectionate, than at other times they are, and we at all times greatly desire they might be. For our *fixedness* and *fervency*, tho' they are *great good things*, as I said, and such as we must take care still to be provided with when we pray, in such measure as we are able; yet are they not the only qualifications of our Prayers; which prevail with God, and move him to hear them. For our *holy Love* and *humble Fear*, our *Trust* and *Dependence*, *Submission* and *Resignedness*, and other

ſpirtual Vertues and Inſtances of Obedience, are likewiſe Diſpoſitions which God reſpects in them; nay, indeed, which he prizes above all, and principally looks at. So that if we pray with theſe, God is honoured by our Prayers, and he will reward them; and our Petitions ſhall not be put up in vain, although, by reaſon of ſome bodily dulneſs or diſtraction, the fixt Attention of our Minds, and the Fervency of our Hearts, which we endeavour after always, and enjoy at other times, ſhould happen to be wanting.

Yea, I add further, ſo long as our *Hearts are honeſt*, and our *Lives entirely obedient*, we are *always* furniſhed with thoſe Qualifications, which are ſufficient to bring down God's Grace and Bleſſing upon us, and which are the principal things that make our Prayers themſelves an acceptable Offering. A good man is drawing down the Bleſſings of Heaven upon himſelf all his Life long, and not only whilſt he is upon his Knees: So that if at any time his Prayers are leſs perfect than he deſires they ſhould be, and chance to falter, that defect will be otherwiſe ſupplyed, and he will have all that Mercy conveyed to him through another means, which his Prayers ſhould have obtained for him; ſeeing that which makes his Prayers procure God's Love and mercy for him, will make his Obedience procure the very ſame.

For I ſuppoſe no Man is ſo weak as to imagine, that it is merely the *lifting up of his Eyes and Hands*, the *Compoſedneſs of his Countenance*, the *Quaintneſs or Eloquence of his Phraſe, and Expreſſions*, the *volubility of his Speech*, or any other *external thing*, which makes his Prayers ſo powerful, and brings down the Bleſſing of God upon them. But it is that *Reverence for God*, that *Dependence upon him*, that *Confidence in him*, that *Love of God* and *deſire of Goodneſs*, that *Acknowledgment of his Kindneſs, Wiſdom and Power*, and *of our own Vanity* and *Unworthineſs*, that *Submiſſion to his Authority*, and *Reſignation to his Pleaſure*, which are all *implyed in Prayer*, and *fitly expreſſed by it*, and which make up the very *Life* and *Spirit* thereof: Theſe, I ſay, it is, which God looks at in our Prayers, and for the ſake whereof he ſo graciouſly accepts and rewards them.

But now, as for all *these*, they are expressed every whit as much by the *Obedience of our Lives*, as by the *Prayer of our Lips*; nay, indeed, *much more*, in as much as our *Actions* are a more perfect Expression, and certain Evidence of all these Tempers of a good Heart, than our *Words* are. They differ as much, as *Words* and *Deeds*, as *Profession* and *Performance*; for whereas in our Prayers we speak and profess all this, in the Obedience of our Lives we work and perform it. We shew our *Love* and *Resignation to God*, when *for his sake we deny our selves*, and *give up our own Will and Obedience to his*. We *acknowledge his Power* and *Authority* most effectually, when we *obey it*; and *own his Providence* to be the best Purpose, when we *contentedly acquiesce in it*, and *patiently submit to it*; and *confess his Love* and *Kindness* after the most acceptable sort, when we *throw our selves upon it*, and *work and endeavour all our Lives long, in Hopes and Expectations of it*. In our daily *Actions*, of *Justice* and *Charity*, of *Temperance* and *Sobriety*, of *Meekness*, *Patience*, *Mercy* and *Forgiveness*, and in all other Instances of Obedience, we *give God the Honour to chuse for us*, to *dispose of us*, to *be sought after and intrusted by us*. We evidence our *Esteem of him*, our *Love and Reverence for him*, our *Trust in him*, our *Dependance on him*, our *Resignation to him*: and that most effectually. So that whatsoever can move God in our Prayers, will move him in a higher degree, and after a better sort, in our Obedience; the Spirit of Goodness which is evidenced in our Prayers, being evidenced much more in the course of good Actions. No Rhetorick therefore of our Prayers is like to that of a good Life, every Action of Obedience in a good Man having the effect of a Prayer, and calling down upon him the same Mercy and the same Grace, which would be procured by a Supplication.

Let a Man therefore make sure in the first Place of a *good Life*, and of an honest and entire Obedience; and then he need not fear to want those things which all good Men have need to pray for, seeing he will shew so much daily in his Life, as will make his Requests be granted, and his Prayers be hearkned to. He cannot perish for want of those Mercies which he prays for, altho' it be sometimes, and will be, do what he can, with

Coldneſs and Diſtraction; becauſe not only *the other obedient Tempers of his Prayers*, when, through ſome unchoſen Hindrances, a due fixedneſs and fervency are wanting, but alſo the *conſtant* and *uninterrupted Obedience of his Life* is daily aſcending up, and brings them down upon him.

Let no good Soul therefore be further troubled and diſquieted upon this account, as if, becauſe after all his Care his Prayers are ſometimes dull and cold, and his Thoughts therein are much diſtracted, he ſhould either be *eternally puniſhed* for them, or at leaſt *go without thoſe Bleſſings* which he deſires in them. For ſo long as the *Spirit of Obedience* appears, both in his Prayers and in his Actions, the *unwilled Diſtractions of his Mind*, and the *Dulneſs* and *Frozenneſs of his Affections* at ſome times, ſhall be no Hindrance either to his *Suit* at preſent, or to his *Happineſs* hereafter. His Requeſt ſhall not be thrown by, nor he condemned for them; but, ſo far as God ſees it fitting for him, it ſhall be granted, and he ſhall eternally be ſaved notwithſtanding them.

3. A *third* Scruple which is wont cauſeleſly to diſquiet and trouble *good* and *honeſt Minds*, is the Words of our Saviour, *Matth.* 12. *I ſay unto you, That* as concerning *every idle Word which Men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an account thereof at the Day of Judgment*, ver. 36.

This ſeems to be a *ſtrict*, and a *ſevere Saying*. For in all the *Crowd* and *Variety of Converſe*, in the *infinite numbers of Queſtions* and *Anſwers*, and other occaſions of Diſcourſe; what man in all the World, but eſpecially of thoſe who are of a *Converſation* that is *free* and *open*, *courteous* and *ingenuous*, *chearful* and *delightſome*, which Tempers the Goſpel doth not only *allow*, but *approve* of; who, I ſay, of all Men, but of Men of this Temper eſpecially, among all the occaſions of Speech can avoid a *multitude of Words?* and where much is ſaid, how can it be, but that much muſt be *idle* and *impertinent?*

And this has a very ill effect, for it frights Men from all the *innocent freedom of Converſe*, and the *chearful Entertainments of Company*. It makes them to appear *ſtaid* and *reſerved*, *ſilent* and *moroſe*; to contribute nothing to the harmleſs Mirth and chearfulneſs of Converſation

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themſelves, and to frown upon it in others. For all Converſe and Society is managed by the Tongue, and the ordinary entertainment of Company is talking and Diſcourſe; but where Men think every idle and uſeleſs Word ſo dangerous a ſin, they are afraid to ſpeak. So that all that comes from them, is ſtudied and deliberate, grave and compoſed; they neither dare uſe any freedom themſelves, nor can without Offence allow it to be uſed by others.

But this is ſo far from being *injoined by Chriſt*, that it is diſcountenanced by Nature; it is ſo far from being a piece of Religion and a holy Duty, that 'tis rather a piece of immorality and ill Manners. For *Ariſtotle* and other *Philoſophers* of old, have long ago made Urbanity, or an innocent Freedom and Facetiouſneſs in Converſation, a Vertue; and have noted this affected Reſervedneſs and unpleaſurable Moroſeneſs in Diſcourſe, with a harſh Cenſure. (*a*) Thoſe, ſays he, *who will neither contribute to the harmleſs Mirth of Company themſelves, nor bear with it in others, are juſtly to be branded with the reproachful Names of Clowniſh and Moroſe.*

(*a*) ὁι μηδ' εἰπόντες μηθὲν γελοῖον, πῖς τε λέγουσι δυσχεραίνοντες, ἄγροικοι κ) σκληροὶ δοκοῦσιν εἶναι. Ethic. ad Nicom. l. 4. c. 8.

And as it was diſcountenanced by the Light of Nature, ſo is it alſo by the Laws of Chriſt. For whatſoever ſome Men may think of it, or how innocently ſoever they may be miſled into that conceit about it; yet is it a Temper which Chriſt never intended to plant among us. For his coming into the World was after another Way, in a free uſe of the innocent Allowances, and Liberties of Mankind. *The Son of Man*, ſays St. *Matthew*, *came eating and drinking*, *i. e.* not in the ſingular Auſterities of *John* the *Baptiſt*, but in a free way of Converſation, ſuch as others uſed, *Matth.* 11. 19. And his Religion injoyns the Vertues of *Candor* and *Benignity*, *Affability* and *Courteſie*, an open Freedom and Alacrity, and all thoſe other ways whereby our Converſation may be rendred innocently agreeable, and whereby we may in any wiſe benefit, whether by profiting or pleaſuring one another. *Whatſoever things*, ſays St. *Paul*, *are* (b) *lovely* or grateful to men, *think on theſe things*, Phil. 4. 8. *Love* is the *Epitome of our whole Duty*, and all the *Sweetners* and *Endearments of Society* that can be, ſo long as they are

(*b*) πρόσφιλη.

lawful

lawful and honeſt, are not only conſiſtent with it, but Parts and Expreſſions of it.

As for the grave Entertainments of Diſcourſe, and religious Conference; they, without Doubt, have a great Uſe, and in their Place may deſerve a great Commendation. For *good Chriſtians may be much better'd and improved*, by having their *Graces awakened*, their *pious Affections inflamed*, their holy Purpoſes fixt and ſettled, their Endeavours directed and encouraged, and every thing that is good in them quickned and confirmed thereby. But then 'tis to be conſidered, that even good things themſelves muſt be taken in their own Seaſon, and muſt not be ſuffer'd to ingroſs all our Time, a great part whereof is to be ſpent upon other things. For we have not only one thing to do, but at ſeveral times ſundry things call for us. *There is a Time*, ſays *Solomon*, *to every thing, and a Seaſon to every Purpoſe under Heaven: There is a Time to weep, and a Time to laugh, a Time to mourn, and a Time to dance*, Eccleſ. 3. 1, 4. There is a Time for Diverſion, as well as a Time for Buſineſs; a Time wherein to have a more liberal and free Diſcourſe, as well as a Time for godly and religious Conference.

Nay the *innocent Delights of Converſation* and pleaſurable Entertainments of Diſcourſe, are themſelves a great *Field of Vertue*, and an *Exerciſe* and *Occaſion* of *many Inſtances of Obedience*. For in them, we may every one of us exerciſe in our *own Perſons*, and be *Examples unto others*, of much *Courteſie* and *Kindneſs*, *Civility* and *Condeſcenſion*, *Affability* and *Obligingneſs*. Let no Man think then, that his Hours of Common Converſe are always loſt Hours, and that whatſoever Time he ſpends upon *Offices of Civility*, and *Freedom of Company*, is miſplaced, and ſtolen from God and Religion. For we are fulfilling God's Laws, and doing his Work, whilſt, as occaſion requires, we keep all theſe Commandments in the pleaſurable Entertainments of common Life; they are ſuch Buſineſs as he has ſet us, and our obedient Performance of them muſt paſs for his ſervice, as well as *Devotion*, *holy Conference*, and *Meditation*.

It is no Prejudice or Hindrance to Religion therefore, to be free and open in Converſation, and pleaſurable and chearful in common Life; but rather an Inſtance

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and expreſſion of it. It is no part of any Man's Duty to be talking always in *Scripture-Phraſe* and *ſanctified Expreſſion*, or elſe to be *wholly ſilent* and *ſeverely moroſe*, and not to talk at all. For an Innocent Chearfulneſs, and Freedom of Diſcourſe, is not ſo truly the good Man's Sin, as the exerciſe of his Vertue and Obedience.

But as for that Opinion, that *every idle and impertinent Word ſhall be ſeverely accounted for at the Day of Judgment*, which is the great Sourer of Converſation, and the occaſion of this Conceit, it is a great Miſtake. For it is not every *idle* and *unprofitable*, but every *falſe*, *ſlanderous*, or otherwiſe *ſinful* and *unlawful Word*, whereof our Saviour ſpeaks, when in that 12th of St. *Matthew* he tells us, that *every idle Word that Men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an account thereof in the Day of Judgment.*

As for the Word which we tranſlate (*c*) *idle*, it may ſignifie *falſe* and *deceitful*; as thoſe Words are which *belye our* (d) *Works*, when our Actions do not Anſwer them. And this is agreeable to the Uſe of the Word (*e*) *vain*, which ſometimes ſignifies the ſame that *falſe* or *lying*. In which Senſe it is uſed in the *third* Commandment, where we are bid *not to take the Name of God in vain, i. e.* in *Perjury* or *Falſhood*. For the Senſe our Saviour gives to it in his Repetition of the Commandments, *Matt.* 5. *It hath been ſaid to them of old*, ſaith he, in the *third* Commandment, *thou ſhalt not forſwear thy ſelf*, or ſwear falſly, v. 33.

(*c*) ἀργὸν ῥῆμα. (d) ἄεργα. (e) μάταιον.

But if nothing more than *uſeleſs* and *unprofitable*, were noted by the *word it ſelf* which we tranſlate *idle*; yet is it no unuſual thing in the Scriptures, by ſeveral Words *to mean and intend more, than in their literal Senſe they do expreſs.* Thus are the *abominable Works of Darkneſs*, mentioned *Eph.* 5. called (*f*) *unfruitful Works*; where the meaning ſurely is, not only that they bring in no Profit or Advantage, but alſo that they are moſt deadly and miſchievous, v. 11. And the *unfaithful wicked Servant*, ſpoken of *Matt.* 25. is called the (*g*) *unprofitable Servant*, v. 30. And after the ſame uſe of Speech, our Words, which do not only tend to none, but to very ill Fruit, may be called (*h*) *idle* or *unprofitable Words.*

(*f*) ἄκαρπα ἔργα. (*g*) ἀχρεῖος δοῦλος. (*h*) ἄργα or ἄεργα ῥήματα.

And ſo they are in this Place. For the idle Words whereof our Saviour ſpeaks, v. 36. are ſuch Words, as

are

are not only *idle* and *unprofitable*, but poſitively *wicked* and *evil*; being indeed *falſe*, *ſlanderous*, and *reviling* words, as will appear from the conſideration of theſe particulars.

For the words which are threatned in that 36*th* Verſe are ſuch as are a ſign, not of a *trifling*, but of an *evil heart*. *How can ye*, ſays he, *being evil, ſpeak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh.* So that *as a good man out of the good treaſure of his heart, bringeth forth*, or ſpeaketh *good things*; *an evil man likewiſe, out of the evil treaſure of his heart, bringeth forth evil things*, v. 34, 35.

And being the fruits of an evil heart, they are the ſigns, not of an *impertinent*, but of an *evil man*. *The Tree is corrupt*, ſays he, *if the fruit be corrupt*; *for the Tree is known by its fruit*, v. 33.

And ſince they are ſuch words, as are thus *ſinful in themſelves*, and an argument of ſo *much ſin in us*; in the laſt Judgment they ſhall be charged upon us to condemn us. *For by thy words*, ſays he, as well as actions, *thou ſhalt be juſtified, and by thy words*, if they be ſuch idle words as I mean, *thou ſhalt be condemned*, v. 37.

The words then which are ſpoken of in this place, from the 33th to the 38th verſ. are ſuch as are a *ſign of a wicked heart*, as *make a wicked man*, and *renders us in the laſt Judgment liable to condemnation.*

But now words of this black die and of theſe miſchievous effects, are not every *idle* and *impertinent*, but *falſe*, *ſlanderous*, *railing*, or otherwiſe *ſinful* and *forbidden words*. But *falſe* and *ſlanderous* words are eſpecially ſtruck at in this place, ſuch as were thoſe *lying* and *contumelious* ones that occaſioned all this diſcourſe, when the *Jews moſt reproachfully charged his Miracles upon the Devil*, telling him that *he caſt out Devils, through Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils*, v. 24. Upon occaſion of which black calumny, he proceeds in all the following Verſes to warn them againſt ſuch *blaſphemous Speeches*; demonſtrating clearly the *unreaſonableneſs* of them, v. 25. to 31. the *ſinfulneſs of them*, verſ. 33. 34, 35; and the *miſchievous effects* of them in the *two* next verſes. Such reproachful words as theſe, let me tell you, ſays he, you ſhall be called to an account for, as well as for your works and actions. *I ſay unto you*, that *every idle*, or ſlanderous and re-

reproachful *word*, such as now you have spoken against me, *that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of Judgment.* For when that day comes, think you of it as you please now, mens words as well as their actions shall be called to an account; *by thy words thou shalt be justified, and*, if they have been such as yours now are, *by thy words thou shalt be condemned*, vers. 36, 37.

And thus by all this it appears, that the *idle word* here threatned by our Lord, is not every word that is *vain* and *useless*, but only *wicked words*, especially such as are *railing, false*, or *slanderous*. And in this sense some Manuscripts read the place. For in the Book of *Steph.* it is not *every idle*, but *every* * *wicked word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of Judgment.*

So that as for this third Scruple, it is as groundless as the former was; no good man need to be disquieted by it, since they shall never be condemned for it.

* Πᾶν ῥῆμα πονηρὸν ὃ ἐαν λαλήσωσιν, &c.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Sin against the Holy Ghost, which is a fourth Cause of Scruple.

ANother causeless ground of fears, which disquiets the minds, and affrights the hearts of good Christian People, is the *sin against the Holy Ghost.* They hear very dreadful things spoken of it; for our *Saviour Christ* who knew it best, and who at the last Day is to judge of it, has told us plainly before-hand, that *he who blasphemeth the Holy Ghost shall never be forgiven, neither in this world nor in the world to come*, Matt. 12. 32; or, as St. *Mark* expresses it, *he shall never have forgiveness, but is liable to eternal damnation*, Mark 3. 29. This is a fearful Sentence upon a desperate sin; and seeing they are in darkness about it, and do not well understand it, they know not but that they themselves *may* be guilty thereof; nay some of a *timorous temper* and *abused minds* go further, and think that they really *are.*

But

But to cure their fears, and to quiet their minds in this matter, there needs nothing more be done, than to give them right apprehenſions, and a clear explication of this ſin; for if they once knew what it is, they would be at eaſe from ſuch tormenting ſuſpicions, and unreaſonable fears about it.

To explain this I will conſider,

1. *What is meant in Scripture by the Holy Ghoſt.*

2. *What is meant here by ſinning againſt it.*

1. *What is meant in Scripture by the Holy Ghoſt.* By the word *Holy Ghoſt* or *Holy Spirit*, according to an uſual *Metonymie of the giver for the gift*, or of the *cauſe for the effect*, is very often meant *the Gifts or Effects of the holy Spirit*, whether they be ſuch as he *ordinarily* produces in us, or ſuch as are *extraordinary* and *miraculous*.

Sometimes it ſignifies ſuch *gifts and diſpoſitions*, whether of *mind* or *temper*, as *the Holy Ghoſt* or *Spirit of God, is wont ordinarily to produce in Men*. It notes, I ſay, the good qualifications of our *minds* or *underſtandings*, which, as all other good gifts, are wrought in us by the Spirit, and derived to us from God. Thus, a *man endued with wiſdom and diſcretion*, ſuch as *Joſeph* adviſed *Pharoah* to *ſet over all the Land of Egypt*, is called *a man in whom the Spirit of God is*, Gen. 41. 33, 38. and the *Spirit of the Lord* mentioned, *Iſa.* 11. is in the very next words explained, by *the Spirit of wiſdom, the Spirit of underſtanding, the Spirit of counſel, the Spirit of knowledge, and the ſpirit of quick underſtanding*, verſ. 2, 3. It ſignifies alſo the *vertuous tempers* and *good qualifications* of our *hearts*, which, like as the former were, are given us of God. Thus that *good* and *charitable temper* which is ſo exemplary in God, and which is wrought in our Souls by him, is called *the Spirit of God*, 1 John 4. *If we love one another, God dwells in us*; ſo that (a) *hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, becauſe he hath given us* that loving temper *of his Spirit*, ver. 12, 13. The *temper* which was ſo obſervable in *Chriſt*, is called *the Spirit of Chriſt*, Rom. 8. 9. and *temper of Elias*, is called *the ſpirit of Elias*, Luke 1. 17. the *Spirit of the Lord*, is explained by the *Spirit of the fear of the Lord*, Iſa. 11. 2. and that *Spirit which God hath given us*, ſays St. *Paul, is not the Spirit of fear, but the Spirit of power, of love, and of a ſound mind*, 2 Tim. 1. 7.

(a) 1 John 3. 24.

Thus

Thus doth the *Spirit of God* signifie many times in Scripture those *ordinary Gifts and Graces, which are the good effects of the Spirit.*

But besides these effects of it, in the good endowments and perfections of our natural faculties, whether of mind or temper, which are *common* and *ordinary*; sometimes it signifies more especially those Gifts which are *extraordinary* and *miraculous.* Of which sort are the *Gift of Tongues*, of *Prophecy*, of *healing Diseases without any natural means*, and performing other *miraculous Operations*, so famous in the first times of the Gospel. Thus, for Example, that Saying, *I will pour out in those days of my Spirit*, is interpreted by this in the next words. *And they shall Prophesie*, Acts 2. 18. And the *elder Brothers*, which was a *double* share of the *prophetick power of Elias*, is called a *double portion of his Spirit*, 2 Kings 2. 9. And the Corinthians *zealous pursuit* of the miraculous and extraordinary Gifts, of *Prophecy*, *speaking with Tongues*, *healing Diseases*, and *working Miracles*; is called by the Apostle their being (*b*) *zealous of Spirits*, or, as we translate it, of *spiritual Gifts*, 1 Cor. 14. 12. (*b*) ζηλωταὶ πνευμάτων.

Now as for these extraordinary Gifts, they are all wrought in us by the same cause, and proceed from the same Principle, *viz.* the *Holy Spirit of God*, or the *Holy Ghost. There are* in the Church now in our times, saith the Apostle, *diversities of Gifts, but* yet *one and the same Spirit* is the Donor of them all. *For to one is given by the Spirit, the word of wisdom*, or of Gospel Truths and Revelations; *to another the word of knowledge*, or discerning of remote things, and prophetical predictions, *by the same Spirit*; *to another Faith* of his being Divinely assisted to produce supernatural effects; *to another* miraculous *Gifts of healing* Diseases without use of means, *by the same Spirit*; *to another the working of Miracles*, or the (*c*) utmost activity and energy of powers in the highest instances and effects of them, of which sort are raising the Dead, casting out Devils, inflicting bodily Torments on contumacious Sinners, *&c.* *to another Prophecy*, or exposition of Scripture and inspired Hymns; *to another discerning of Spirits*, both in seeing into mens spiritual thoughts and intentions, and also in discerning who wrought true Miracles, and who Satanical Delusions, who were divinely inspired, and who were mere Pretenders; *to another the* (*c*) ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων.

the ecſtatick *Gift* of ſpeaking *divers kinds of Tongues* in ſuch rapturous Tranſports, as permitted them not to ſtay to interpret what they ſaid, and made them afterwards forget it; *to another the Gift of interpreting* thoſe *ſtrange Tongues* into the vulgar Language of any in the Congregation. *But all theſe* diverſities of Gifts, *worketh that one and the ſelf-ſame Spirit, dividing* all theſe different Gifts *to every man ſeverally as he will,* 1 Cor. 12. 4, 8, 9, 10, 11.

And ſeeing it is the ſame *Spirit* or *Holy Ghoſt,* which is the *Author* and *Giver* of them all; therefore are they all indifferently called by either name. For ſometimes all theſe extraordinary Gifts, both the *power of Miracles,* and the *Gift of Tongues and Prophecy,* are called the *Spirit.* Thus when the Apoſtles began to *ſpeak with Tongues,* and to *Propheſie,* as well as to *work Miracles* and *heal Diſeaſes,* it is ſaid that *the Spirit was poured out upon them,* Acts 2. 17, 18, 19. And all theſe varieties of Gifts of one ſort or other, which are reckoned up by St. *Paul* in this twelfth Chapter to the *Corinthians,* are attributed to the *Spirit,* and ſaid to be *wrought by it*; and the Apoſtles being *filled with the Holy Ghoſt,* and *ſpeaking with Tongues,* is called their *ſpeaking by the Spirit-------they were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt,* ſays St. *Luke, and began to ſpeak as the Spirit gave them utterance,* Acts 2. 4. And in like manner at other times, all theſe ſame powers, whether of *Underſtanding* or *Action,* of *Tongues* or *Miracles,* are called the *Holy Ghoſt.* Thus the Gifts of *Signs* and *Wonders,* and *divers Miracles,* are reckoned among the *Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt,* Heb. 2. *God,* ſays St. *Paul, bearing the Apoſtles witneſs, with Signs, and Wonders, and divers Miracles, and* other *Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt,* verſ. 4. And the *Signs* and *Wonders* which were done by the *hands of the Apoſtles,* particularly that of *healing the lame Man,* ſo much taken notice of *Acts* 3. is ſaid to be the *witneſs of the Holy Ghoſt,* Acts 5. 12, 32.

Thus, I ſay, by reaſon that all theſe *extraordinary Gifts,* whether relating to our *minds* in *knowledge* and *ſpeaking with Tongues,* or to our *executive powers* in *healing Diſeaſes,* and *working Miracles,* proceeded all from the ſelf-ſame *Holy Ghoſt* or *Holy Spirit*: the Gifts of either ſort are called indifferently by either name, being

ing, sometimes called the *Spirit*, and sometimes the *Holy Ghost*,

But although, as I say, for this Reason the Words *Spirit* and *Holy Ghost* are sometimes used *Promiscuously*, to signifie *all* or *any* of these extraordinary Gifts *indifferently*; yet, what is very material to our purpose, sometimes, nay very frequently, they are (*d*) *distinguished*. And then by the *Holy Ghost* is meant, not *all extraordinary Gifts indifferently*, but particularly those which respect our *Understandings*, not *executive Powers*, consisting rather in *Illumination*, than in *Power* and *Action*; of which sort are, the *Gift of Tongues*, of *Prophecy*, of *discerning Spirits*, of *Knowledge* of *Revelation*, and such like. Thus, the lying against *that part* of the *Gift of discerning Spirits*, which consisted in understanding the *Thoughts and Purposes of the Heart*, is called *lying to the Holy Ghost*. For so St *Peter*, who was endowed with this Gift, tells *Ananias*, when he would have imposed upon him; *Why hath Satan filled thine Heart*, saith he, *to lye to the Holy Ghost*, Acts 5. 3. And St. *Stephen*'s being filled with an extraordinary *Revelation* of *Christ's sitting at God's Right hand* in Heaven, is called *his being filled with the Holy Ghost*, Acts 7. 55. But more especially the *Gifts of Tongues* and *Prophecy*, are dignified with that name. Thus in the 10th Chapter of the *Acts*, when the *Gentiles* in *Cornelius*'s House begun to *speak with Tongues* upon St. *Peter*'s Preaching; it is said that *the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word*, and that *on the Gentiles was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost*, v. 44, 45, 46. The Disciples at *Ephesus*, who being baptized with the *Baptism of John*, cannot be supposed ignorant of the many miraculous Cures so much talked of among the *Jews*, and of the strange Effects of the Spirit in Jesus whom *John* preached; did yet tell *Paul*, that *they had not so much as heard of the Holy Ghost*, Acts 19. 2. which might very well be, because the *Holy Ghost*, or *Gifts of Tongues* and *Prophecy*, were *not given till after Jesus was glorified*, John 7. 39. But upon the Preaching of St. *Paul*, they were made Partakers of it; for *when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they spake with tongues, and prophesied*, Acts 19. 6. And to name no more Instances in this Matter, that Place which I now hinted in the

(*d*) See the excellent Dr *Patrick* his Witnesses to Christ, par. 1. c. 7.

7th Chapter of St. *John*, is a full Proof of this reſtrained Acceptation. For there, after all the Inſtances of *curing Diſeaſes*, *caſting out Devils*, and other Effects of the *Spirit* in miraculous Operations, which Chriſt ſhewed whereſoever he came; it is yet expreſly affirmed, that *the Holy Ghoſt was not yet given, becauſe Jeſus was not yet glorified* by his Exaltation to the Right-hand of God, v. 37. *The Holy Ghoſt, i. e.* theſe *Gifts of Tongues* of *Prophecy*, and the like, which are all that remained ſtill to be ſhed abroad, and which came upon the *Apoſtles*, at the Deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt at *Pentecoſt*, Acts 2.

Thus is the *Holy Ghoſt*, ſometimes ſet to denote, not all the miraculous and extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit promiſcuouſly, but particularly thoſe which reſpect the *Mind* or *Underſtanding*, ſuch as the Gift of *Tongues*, of *Prophecy*, of *deep Knowledge*, and the like.

And on the other Side, as for the Word *Spirit*, it is ſometimes ſet to expreſs, not *all extraordinary Gifts* and *Effects* of the *Spirit in general*, but thoſe by Name which *reſpect our executive, not knowing Powers*, and which conſiſt not in *Illumination*, but in *Action*. Of which ſort are, the *Gift of healing Diſeaſes*, of *caſting out Devils*, of *raiſing the Dead*, and other *miraculous Operations*. Thus, the *miraculous Courage* and *Valour* which was given to *Othoniel*, is called the *Spirit of the Lord*, Judges 3. 10. as is that likewiſe, which was given to *Gideon*, Judges 6. 34. and the *miraculous ſtrength of Sampſon*, is called the *Spirit of the Lord upon Sampſon*, Judges 14. 6. And upon Chriſt's working the *miraculous Cure* upon the *Man with the withered Hand*, St. *Matthew* applies to him that ſaying of the Prophet, *the Spirit of the Lord came upon him*, Matt. 12. 18. and his *caſting out Devils*, he himſelf attributes to the Spirit of God, I, ſays he, *by the Spirit of God caſt out Devils*, v. 28.

As by the *Holy Ghoſt* therefore, are meant particularly the Gifts of Illumination, in Tongues and Prophecy; ſo by the Spirit are ſignified the Gifts of Power, *in healing Diſeaſes, caſting out Devils*, and *doing mighty and miraculous Works*.

And both theſe together, take up the full Compaſs of the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, and are both diſtinctly expreſſed by St. *Peter*, when he ſays, that *Jeſus*

was

was anointed with the Holy Ghoſt, and with Power, Acts 10. 38.

Theſe then are the ſeveral Meanings of the Words, *Holy Ghoſt*, and *Holy Spirit*. They denote, as the *Third Perſon in the Trinity*, the *Holy Ghoſt himſelf*; ſo alſo thoſe Gifts and *Effects* which proceed from him. Whether thoſe Gifts are *ordinary*, either in the *Endowments of our Minds*, or the *vertuous Tempers* and *Diſpoſitions of our Wills and Hearts*; or *extraordinary* and *miraculous*. Wherein yet we muſt obſerve this difference, that the Gifts of the *executive Powers*, in *healing Diſeaſes, caſting out Devils, working Miracles*, are ſometimes by a peculiar Name called the Spirit; and the Gifts of the *knowing* or *underſtanding Faculties*, in *Prophecies, Revelations, ſpeaking with divers ſorts of Tongues*, are by a contradiſtinct Name called the *Holy Ghoſt*.

And thus having ſhewn what is meant by the *Holy Ghoſt*, I proceed now to ſhew,

2. *What is meant by ſinning againſt it*; and *which of all thoſe which are committed againſt it, is the unpardonable Sin.*

The only way whereby any Men are capable to ſin againſt God, as was obſerved, is by *Affront* and *Diſhonour*; for God is out of our Reach for any other ſort of Injury, and we cannot otherwiſe hurt him, than by ſhewing our Contempt and Diſreſpect of him.

And in regard the *Holy Ghoſt* in his own Perſon is *very and eſſential God*, this muſt needs be the only way whereby we can ſin againſt him likewiſe. We cannot injure him in his *Nature*, but only in his *Honour*; but that we ſin againſt him, when we *walk croſs to him*, and *oppoſe him*, or any way *ſlight* and *contemn*, *undervalue* or *reproach* him, or any of thoſe Excellent and Divine Gifts which proceed from him.

Now this we do more or leſs in *every Sin*. For this *Spirit* of God, is an *univerſal Inſtrument of Faith and good Life*; it has taken the utmoſt Care by *Miracles*, and other its *convictive Evidences, to evince the Truth* of Chriſt's Doctrine; and doth now ſtill, by his *daily Suggeſtions* and *Sollicitations*, excite Men to the *Obſervance* of it. And ſeeing the Spirit of God has ſhewn it ſelf ſo much concerned, for our *Faith and Obedience*; every *Act* of *Unbelief* and *Diſobedience*, is a direct Oppoſition to it, and Reproach of it, and therefore is a Sin againſt it.

But every ſuch Sin is not the *unpardonable Fault* here mentioned. For our very *wilful Sins themſelves*, as has been ſhewn, *are not deſperate under Chriſt's Religion*, the Goſpel being a Covenant that doth not damn Men upon all voluntary Sin, but encourages their Repentance with the Promiſe of Pardon; ſo that although all our Sins are againſt God and his Spirit, they are not *irremiſſible*, but will be remitted to every Man who repents of them.

But the *unpardonable Sin*, is a Sin by it ſelf; it has ſomething peculiar in it from all other Sins, which by ſhutting us out from all poſſibility of Repentance, excludes it from all Hopes of being forgiven.

And indeed, I think, it is plainly this. *It is a ſinning againſt the Holy Ghoſt in the laſt Senſe, as it ſignifies not only the Power of Miracles, but alſo the Gift of Tongues, and other Illuminations of the Holy Ghoſt, which came down upon the Apoſtles at* Pentecoſt: *and is ſuch a Sinning againſt theſe, as is particularly by Reviling and Blaſpheming them.* This, and none other I take to be the Sin here mentioned. For the clearer diſcerning whereof, we will conſider the Sins againſt the *Holy Ghoſt* in all the Acceptations before laid down; and in all of them, except the laſt, we ſhall find room for *Pardon* and *Remiſſion*.

Firſt then, to ſin againſt the *Holy Ghoſt*, as it ſignifies the *ordinary Endowments, and vertuous Tempers of our Minds and Wills, is not the unpardonable Sin* that is here ſpoken of. For every Sin againſt any *particular Vertue*, is a Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt in that Senſe. Every Act of *Drunkenneſs*, for inſtance, is againſt the Gift of *Sobriety*; and every Act of *Uncleanneſs*, is againſt the Gift of *Continency*; and ſo it is, in the ſeveral Actions of all other ſorts of Sin. But now as for all theſe, the great Offer and Invitation of the Goſpel is, that Men would accept of Mercy upon Repentance. The *Inceſtuous Corinthian* ſinned deeply againſt the Grace of *Chaſtity*, and he *repented*, and was *forgiven*; St. *Peter denied his Lord*, and upon his Repentance he was alſo pardoned; and the ſame Grace has been allowed, as we have ſeen, to all other wilful Sinners.

Nay, in this ſort of Sinning againſt the *Holy Ghoſt*, *viz.* by *ſinning againſt thoſe Chriſtian Gifts and Graces which he works in us*, there is Mercy to *very great degrees*.

grees. For sometimes we do not hearken to his holy Motions, but fall into more *ordinary Sins* and *offensive Indecencies*, notwithstanding all his vertuous Suggestions and Endeavours to the contrary: And then he is troubled and *grieved* at us, *Eph.* 4. 30. And at other times, we venture upon *more heinous Crimes*, and after much Conflict within our selves, which almost quite lay waste the Conscience, and undo all the vertuous Tempers and Resolution of our Souls, so that we lie long in our Impenitence, as *David* did in the matter of *Uriah*, and are almost hardned in our wicked way before we are able again to recover out of it: And in these Offences, the Spirit has been so much affronted, and his importunate Suggestions so frequently thrown out, that he is almost ready to *forsake us*, and to *leave us to our selves*, so that it may be called a *quenching of him*, 1 Thess. 5. 19. But although the last of these especially be very *dangerous*; yet is neither of them desperate. But after we have been guilty of them, God continues still to make Offers and Invitations, and by his *long Sufferance* and his *gracious Providences*, and the *repeated Calls of his Word and Ministers*; he still endeavours to recover us to pardon, by recalling us to Repentance. Yea the holy Spirit it self makes fresh Assaults upon us, and tries again whether we will hearken to it, and be relieved by it; as it was with *David* after he had complained of his being *deprived of God's presence*, and of the *Holy Spirits being taken from him*, Psal. 51. 11; and as it is with every other *reclaimed Back-slider*.

The sinning against the *Holy Ghost* therefore in this Sense, as it signifies the *ordinary Gifts and Graces of the Holy Ghost*, is far from being the unpardonable Sin, and is manifestly under the Grace of Pardon and Repentance.

Secondly, Nor is a Sin against the *extraordinary Gifts* of *Casting out Devils, healing Diseases, working Miracles*, or other things called the *Spirit*, that *unpardonable* Sin which is here intended. To *blaspheme the Spirit*, 'tis true, comes very near it, and when Men are once gone on to that, God is very nigh giving of them up, and using no more means about them to bring them either to *Faith* or *Repentance*, which are the only way to Pardon and Forgiveness. But although this Pitch of Sin

be extreme dangerous, yet in great likelihood it is not wholly deſperate. For after all the Dirt that Men had thrown upon this Evidence, *viz.* the *miraculous Operation wrought by Chriſt whilſt he continued upon Earth*, God was ſtill pleaſed to uſe ſome means further to bring them to believe and repent, which is the way to be pardoned; and that was the Evidence of the *Holy Ghoſt*, which came down to compleat all after that *Jeſus* was *glorified*, Acts 2. This great Proof which was to be poured out upon the Diſciples at *Pentecoſt*, and upon other Chriſtians at the Impoſition of their Hands for a good while after, might effect that, wherein the other had failed, and be acknowledged by thoſe very Men who had blaſphemed the former. So that their Caſe, notwithſtanding it were gone extreme far, was not for all that quite hopeleſs, becauſe one Remedy ſtill remained, which God reſolved he would uſe to reclaim them from their Infidelity, though after that he would try no more.

And of this I think we have a clear Proof, even in thoſe *blaſphemous Phariſees*, whoſe *Reviling of the Spirit* was the occaſion of all this Diſcourſe. For as for the *Spirit*, they blaſphemed it in this very Chapter, when upon occaſion of the *miraculous Cure of the Man with the withered Hand*, v. 13. and of *Chriſt's caſting out of Devils*, v. 28. both which were ſo manifeſtly wrought before their Eyes, that none of them durſt queſtion, or deny the Working of them; they go blaſphemouſly to charge theſe evident Effects of the *Spirit* upon the Power of *Magick*, and to ſay, that theſe Works of *God* were performed by the *Devil*. For when theſe mighty Effects of the Spirit were urged to them in behalf of *Jeſus*, *they anſwered and ſaid*, ſays St. *Matthew*, *This Fellow doth not caſt out Devils, but by Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils*, v. 24. Here is a Reproach to theſe miraculous Gifts of the Spirit, as great as can be invented; for it is nothing leſs than an attributing them to the moſt foul and loathſome Fiends in Nature, even to the very Devils themſelves. But yet this Blaſphemy, as dangerous as it was, is not utterly excluſive of Faith and Repentance, and thereby unpardonable and hopeleſs. For our Lord himſelf in this very *Chapter*, ſpeaks ſtill of ſeeking their Repentance, and gives them a Promiſe that

ſome

ſome further Means ſhould ſtill be uſed to cure their Infidelity, after that they had blaſphemed this; telling theſe very Men, that the *Sign of his Death and Reſurrection*, with the other Evidences of the Holy Ghoſt which were to enſue upon it, ſhould be a further Argument to ſatisfie them in what they enquired after, *viz. his being the Meſſiah, or the Son of God.* For *when certain of the Phariſees*, preſently upon his finiſhing this Diſcourſe of their blaſpheming of the Holy Spirit, *v.* 37. *made anſwer to him, ſaying, Maſter, we would ſee a ſign from thee* to confirm to us the Truth of that Pretention: *He anſwered*, as St. *Matthew* goes on, *an evil and an Adulterous Generation ſeeketh a ſign, and there ſhall no* further *ſign be given it, but* only *the ſign of the Prophet Jonas*, and that indeed ſhall. *For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the Whales Belly*, and was afterwards delivered out of it to go and preach to the Ninevites; *ſo ſhall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth*, and after that riſe again to preach by his Apoſtles to you and all the World, ſending to you, for a further Evidence ſtill, the Holy Ghoſt, *v.* 38, 39, 40.

And this Pardonableneſs of *blaſpheming of the Spirit*, our Lord further intimates in that very Place, by a wary Change of the Phraſe when he comes to ſpeak of the unpardonableneſs of it; calling the unpardonable Blaſphemy, not a *Blaſphemy againſt the Spirit* (although it was the Spirit which was indeed blaſphemed, *v.* 24. and whereof he had juſt made mention, *v.* 28.) but a *Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, which being, as St. *John* ſays, * *not yet given*, could not yet be blaſphemed, *v.* 31, 32. * John 7. 39.

But

Thirdly, the deſperate and unpardonable Sin here mentioned, which ſhall *never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come*, is a Sin againſt the *laſt* and *greateſt Evidence* of all, *viz.* the *Gift of Tongues*, of *Prophecy*, and of other things called the *Holy Ghoſt*. Of all the other Evidence that came before to win Men to a Belief of Chriſt's Religion, which is the only means of Pardon to the World, God had ſtill a Reſerve, and reſolved upon ſome further Courſe if they proved ineffectual. If the *Teſtimony of John Baptiſt to Chriſt's being the Lamb of God*, if the *Meſſage of an Angel at his*

Conception, the *Star at his Birth*, and the *Quire of Angels at his Entrance into the World*; if the *Innocency of his Life*, the *Wiſdom of his Words*, and the *Mightineſs of his Wonders*, in *commanding the Winds and Seas*, in *curing Diſeaſes*, in *caſting out Devils*, in *reſtoring the Weak to Strength*, and *the Dead to Life*; if all theſe prove unſucceſsful, and unable to perſwade an *Infidel* and *perverſe Generation*: yet ſtill God reſolves to try one Means more, which before that Time the World never ſaw nor heard of, and that is, the *ample and moſt full effuſion of the Holy Ghoſt upon the Apoſtles at Pentecoſt, and upon others at the Impoſition of their Hands for a long time after.* This further Evidence ſhall ſtill be given, to ſubdue the ſtubbornneſs of Men's unbelief, which had proved too hard for all the former. When I am departed from you, ſays our Saviour to his Apoſtles, *I will ſend* the Holy Ghoſt, who is *the Comforter* or (*d*) Advocate, *unto you.* And when he is come, he ſhall plead my Cauſe more convincingly, than the Operations of the Spirit have done hitherto. For *he ſhall reprove* and (*e*) convince *the World*, and thoſe who remained Infidels after they had ſeen all the Evidence of the Spirit, *of* their own *Sin in not believing on me*, and *of* my *Righteouſneſs*, and truth in ſaying I am the *Meſſiah*, *becauſe* he ſhall ſhew that *I* am owned above, and *am gone to my Father*, whence I have ſent him down ſo plentifully upon you, *John* 16. 8, 9, 10.

(*d*) παράκλητον.

(*e*) ἐλέγξει.

But when once God had given this Proof, he had done all that he deſigned: For this is the laſt Remedy, which he had decreed to make uſe of to cure the Infidelity of an unbelieving Age. So that if Men ſhall uſe it, as they have done all that went before; and if inſtead of being perſwaded by it, they ſhall proceed, not only to *ſlight* and *deſpiſe*, but, what is more, to *revile* and *blaſpheme it*, as they have already done with the Spirit; then is the irreverſible Decree gone out againſt them, and God is unalterably reſolved to ſtrive no more with them, but to let them die in their Unbelief. If they ſhould be won by it indeed, and believe upon it; be their former Offences what they will, no leſs than a blaſpheming of the Spirit, yet may they juſt expect to be pardoned. For the offer of Grace is univerſal, *whoſoever believes and is baptized ſhall be ſaved*,

ved, Mark 16. 16. and *nothing is impossible to him that believeth*, Mark 9. 23. But when once men have gone so far as to be guilty of it, their sin is unpardonable, because their Faith is impossible. For they have rejected all the evidence, which any man can urge for their conviction; seeing they have despised all that, which God has offered. Their infidelity is stronger than can be cured, by any Argument that Christ either has, or will afford to prevail over it; so that they must die in their sin, and there is no hope for them.

Indeed if God so please, there is no question but that after they have once blasphemed it, he can still so melt and soften, fashion and prepare their minds, that afterwards they shall hearken to the incomparable Evidence of the Spirit and the Holy Ghost, which to any honest mind are irresistible. But this sin is of so provoking a nature, that when once they are guilty of it he will not. He has past an irreversible Decree upon them, never more to meddle with them; so that they never will be pardoned, because, as things stand, they never will be reclaimed. Which is the very reason, which the Apostle himself gives of the desperate state of *Apostate* Christians. For by renouncing of that faith, which, upon the evidence both of the Spirit, and the Holy Ghost, they had been before convinced of; *they despite*, says he, *the Spirit of Grace*, as it implies both the Spirit and the Holy Ghost too, so that as for them, *it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance*, that being such a sin, as God will never give repentance to, *Heb.* 6. 6.

The sining against the Holy Ghost in this sense then, as it denotes the *Gift of Tongues*, of *Prophecy*, &c. which is the last Evidence that God is resolved to make use of for the conversion of an unbelieving World, is that unpardonable sin which shall never be forgiven.

And yet even here, in this limited and contracted sense of the word *Holy Ghost*, we must still proceed with some caution. For it is not every *affront* and *dishonour* that is put upon these Gifts, which is the sin here stiled irremissible. *Simon Magus* cast a very high indignity, and reproach upon them in his *actions*; for he went about to purchase the *Gift of Tongues*, and other *sacred Illuminations* called the *Holy Ghost*, which fell upon

upon men at the impoſition of the Apoſtles hands, as if they had been only a trick to get money, or a fit thing to drive trade withal, and make a gainful merchandice. *When Simon ſaw, that through the laying on of the hands of the Apoſtles the Holy Ghoſt was given, he offered them money,* ſays St. *Luke*, ſaying, *Give me alſo this power, that on whomſoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghoſt,* Acts 8. 18, 19. This was a very great abuſe, and a moſt unworthy comparing of the heavenly and holy Spirit of God, to a mercenable ware, and vendible commodity; thinking it fit to ſerve any ends, and to miniſter to the baſeſt purpoſes of filthy lucre and covetouſneſs. But yet this ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt in its ſtricteſt acceptation, was not the unpardonable ſin; it came very near it indeed, and would hardly be remitted; but ſtill in all likelihood it was remiſſible. And therefore St. *Peter*, although he be very ſevere upon this ſordid man for the high affront, doth not yet pronounce an irreverſible doom of damnation upon him, but on the contrary exhorts him to repent; that the ſin of his heart may be forgiven. *Repent*, ſays he, *of this thy wickedneſs, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee*, verſ. 22.

But that which is the deſperately damning ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, which ſhall never be forgiven, either in this World, or in that which is to come; is the ſinning againſt it, not by *interpretation* only in our *actions*, but *directly in our words and expreſſions*. It is our *ſpeaking reproachfully* and *ſlanderouſly of it*, as the Phariſees did of the *ſpirit*, when they attributed it to *Beelzebub*. And therefore it is expreſly called, the *ſpeaking blaſphemouſly* againſt the Holy Ghoſt. *Whoſoever ſpeaketh* * blaſphemouſly *againſt the Holy Ghoſt* when he ſhall come, *it ſhall never be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come*, Matth. 12. 31, 32. The great weight lies in that, for this heavy doom he denounced upon them, ſays St. *Mark*, *becauſe they ſaid he hath an unclean Spirit*, Mark 3. 30.

* Βλασφημία πνεύματος.

And thus at length we ſee, what that ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt is, whoſe doom is ſo dreadful, and whoſe caſe is ſo deſperate under the Goſpel. It is nothing leſs, than a *ſlandering and reviling*, inſtead of owning and aſſenting to *that laſt evidence, which God has given us of the truth*

truth of the Gospel, in the Gifts of Tongues, Prophecy, and other extraordinary Illuminations called the Holy Ghost. So that no man who owns Christ's Religion, and thinks he was no Impostor, and believes that these miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost were no magical shows or diabolical delusions, can ever be guilty of it. No, before he arrive to that, he must not only be an Infidel to the faith, but also a *Blasphemer of it*; he must not only disbelieve this last and greatest Evidence, but disparage and rail against it. If then there be any man who owns Christ's Authority, and obeys his Laws, and believes his Gospel, and hopes in its Promises, and fea s its Threatnings, and expects that every word of that Covenant, which was confirmed to us by the infallible evidence of the Spirit and the Holy Ghost, shall come to pass; he is not more guiltless of any sin, than of this against the Holy Ghost; for he doth not so much as slight and disparage, but owns and submits to it.

If good men therefore are afraid, by reason of the irremissibleness of the sin against the Holy Ghost; they fear where they need not, and their scruple is utterly unreasonable and groundless. For let it be as unpardonable as it will, that shall not hurt them, for they can never suffer by it, since, whilst they continue such as now they are, they cannot possibly be guilty of it, or of any thing that comes near it.

CHAP. VII.

The Conclusion.

BEsides these Scruples already mentioned, some good minds may be put in fear and doubt of the safety of their present state, because St. *John* says, that *whosoever is born of God sinneth not*, being no longer a *Child of God* if he do, 1 *John* 3. 6, 9.

But the sin here spoken of, as was observed (*a*) above, is defined by St. *John* himself at the fourth Verse of this Chapter, to be, not every deviation or *going beside the* (*a*) Book 4. Chap. 2.

Law,

* ἀνομία *Law*, but a *wilful Tranſgreſſion* and * *rejecting of the Law it ſelf.* And this indeed is inconſiſtent with a regenerate ſtate, and puts us out of God's favour, making us liable to eternal deſtruction. But then the caſe for theſe ſins is not deſperate, ſeeing if once we forſake them, and repent of them, we are as ſafe again as ever we were before we committed them. For our Repentance will ſet us ſtreight; and if we tranſgreſs not wilfully again, we are without the reach of condemnation.

Others doubt, whether, when once they have wilfully ſinned, they ever can repent, or ſhall afterwards be pardoned, becauſe they read of *Eſau*, that after he had ſold his *birth-right* with the bleſſing that attended it, *when he would have inherited it afterwards he was rejected*, and *found no place* of a * change of mind or *repentance*, *though he ſought it carefully with tears*, Heb. 12. 17.

† μετα οιας.

In anſwer to this, it will be ſufficient to obſerve, that this change of mind or repentance which *Eſau* ſought, but could not find, was not in himſelf, but in his Father *Iſaac*.

It was not in *himſelf*, I ſay, for there he did find a place for it, being he was really full thereof. For he was heartily ſorry for his former folly, in parting with his *birth-right*; and for his preſent unhappineſs, in being cozen'd of his Father *Iſaac*'s *bleſſing*; and he ſought to have them reverſt with bitter crys, and importunate deſires, and much unfeigned intreaties; which clearly ſhew, that *Eſau*'s own mind was changed abundantly.

But that repentance, or change of mind in reverſing of the bleſſing, for which he laboured hard, but without effect, was in his Father *Iſaac*. The good Old Man had already pronounced the Bleſſing upon *Jacob*, and when *Eſau* moſt earneſtly intreated him to reverſe it, he told him flatly he would not: *I have bleſſed him*, ſaith he, *yea, and he ſhall be bleſſed*, Gen. 27. 33. For the Story; as it is there recited, is plainly this. When *Iſaac* bid his Son *Eſau* provide him ſome Veniſon, that he might eat thereof, and bleſs him before he died: *Jacob*, by the counſel and aſſiſtance of his Mother *Rebecca*, counterfeited both the Perſon and the Veniſon of *Eſau*, and going in therewith to his Father before

Eſau

Esau returned, craftily stole away the Blessing from him: And when *Esau* came in afterwards, to receive the Blessing which *Isaac* his Father had promised him, he tells him, that *Jacob* his Brother had come with subtilty before him, and under a crafty disguise had taken it away from him. For *I have made him thy Lord*, saith he, Vers. 37. *and all his Brethren have I given to him for Servants.* And although *Esau* intreated his Father to reverse it, and *cryed*, Vers. 34, as it is there said, *with a great and exceeding bitter cry*; 38. yet *Isaac* would not change his mind, or alter what he had pronounced: *I have blessed him*, says he, *yea and he* 33. *shall be blessed.* This reversion of the Blessing, and repentance or change of mind, in his Father *Isaac*, was that which *Esau* endeavoured after, and which, as St. *Paul* here says, *he sought carefully with tears.* But, as he observes out of this Story, all was in vain, for it would not be granted him. When he sought to *inherit the blessing*, his suit was not granted, but *rejected*; for *Isaac*'s Decree was past, and *he found no place of repentance*, or way to make him change his mind; *although he sought* that * change *carefully with tears.*

* αὐτὸν.

In this place then the Apostle says not at all, that it *was impossible for* Esau *to repent of his sins against God*, or that *God would not forgive him upon his repentance*: but only that *Isaac would not repent of his decree*, or reverse that Blessing which he had pronounced upon *Jacob*. Which inflexibleness of *Isaac* he doth indeed make use of in these Verses, to illustrate God's inexorableness towards some Sinners; but then those are not all *wilful Sinners* indifferently, but only *Apostates*, who have wilfully renounced their Christianity, which, as we have seen before, is a sin that God will afford no more Grace, or place of repentance to. And this, as I take it, appears plainly from the foregoing Verses. *Take care*, says he, *lest that which is lame*, or the weak Christian, *be turned out of the way* of *his* Christian Profession through fears of Persecution, vers. 13. *Look diligently lest any man fail*, or fall from *the Grace* or Gospel *of God*, vers. 15. Which I exhort you the more earnestly to do, because if any man doth reject all those Gospel-blessings and Privileges, which in that Religion which you have received are now offered to him, and apostatize from them; God will never afford him the tender of them again, but will

will be as unalterable in his Decree againſt him, as *Iſaac* was in his againſt *Eſau*, who as you know from the Story, after once he had miſt of the *bleſſing*, *found no place of repentance*, *though he ſought it carefully with his tears*, v. 17.

Others again are troubled in mind, and are afraid leſt their Souls are yet in danger, becauſe they do not perceive themſelves *to grow in grace*, and *to be increaſed in goodneſs*. They complain that their *ſpiritual life* is at a ſtand, and that they are not more *devout* and *piouſly affected*, more *vertuous* and better *Chriſtians*, than they were for ſome conſiderable time before. And this makes them jealous, leſt they ſhould paſs for *idle Servants*, who have not uſed and improved their *Talents*, and who ſhall be dealt with at the laſt Day as if they had abuſed them.

To ſpeak clearly to this buſineſs, and yet to be as brief as conveniently I can, it is firſt obſervable, that to *grow in grace*, is the ſame thing as to *grow in vertue and goodneſs*, or to *go on to higher meaſures of life and perfection, in any, or in all the inſtances of duty and obedience*. For an obedient life, as I have largely ſhewn, is that ſole inſtance and proof, of *grace*, which can render any of us acceptable in God's ſight, and whereupon the Goſpel encourages us to hope for pardon and a happy Sentence at the laſt Judgment. So that if any man's life is more perfect than it was, if he grows in knowing and doing good, and keeping back from evil; if he begins to have a greater honour for God, to be more careful to pleaſe, and more afraid to offend him; if he is more forward to *depend upon his Providence*, to *truſt in his Promiſes*, to *reſign himſelf up to his Will*, and to *ſubmit to his Pleaſure*, to *praiſe him for all his Excellencies* and *Diſpoſals*, and to *perform all his Precepts*: If he is more humble and heavenly-minded, chaſt and temperate, juſt and charitable; if he is more meek and gentle, courteous and affable, *quiet* and *peaceable*, more ready to *repair wrongs*, and to *forgive injuries* than formerly: If he thus advances to *higher meaſures*, to *greater eaſe*, or to *more conſtancy* and *evenneſs of obedience*, in *any*, or in *all inſtances of Duty* towards *God* and *Men*, and that in *all Relations*; his vertue is in its *ſpring*, and is ſtill going on; he *grows in grace*, and God will accordingly reward him.

One

One *particular* Vertue there is, which men are wont to look at more especially in this matter, and that is *Prayer*. They measure their growth in grace by their improvement in this, and think their *spiritual life* is then *most perfect*, when their *Devotions are most enlarged*. Which they conclude they are not when they are put up with the greatest *humility* and *reverence*, *trust* and *dependence*, *submission* and *resignedness to God Almighty*, or with any other of those *obedient tempers* implied in Prayer which are apt to influence our *whole lives*; but when they are accompanied with the most *sensible joys* and *ravishing transports*, and *unusual height of fervency* and *affection*. So that if at any time they can *pray* more *passionately*, and put forth more *intense desires*, and work themselves up to more *heavenly Raptures* than ordinarily they have been able to attain to, they fansie that they do indeed grow in grace, and are become higher in God's favour and acceptance. But if ever this service happens to be more *irksome* to them, and they discharge it with much *backwardness* and *weariness*, *dulness* and *indifference*; they think God frowns upon them, and has deserted them, and that their grace is in a declining state, and sinking down to nothing.

But this is a very *uncertain* and *dangerous* mark, for any man in this case to judge by, and will very often deceive him that builds upon it. For these fervent heats, and delightsome transports of Devotion, are not so much a *duty* as a *privilege*, which all tempers cannot attain to, but only those that are naturally disposed for it: so that a growth in them, is not a growth in *saving grace*, but rather in *sensible joy* and *happiness*, and renders us not so truly gracious in God's Eyes, as happy in our own.

Besides, as an improvement in these religious and pleasing raptures, is not a growth in grace it self, so neither is it always joined with it, and therefore no sure argument can be deduced from it. For 'tis easily observable, that several persons of *devotional tempers*, who are usually raised up to a high pitch, and ravished with most delightsome transports in their Prayers; are yet very *dangerously defective in many instances of necessary Duty* and a *holy life*. They fall oft-times, even whilst they enjoy their blissful heats and heavenly raptures of Devotion,

votion, into damning acts of *fraud* and *injuſtice*, *anger* and *malice*, *ſtrife* and *variance*, *fierceneſs* and *revenge*: they live in them, and are habitually inſlaved to them, and yet for all that they find no want of this delight in Prayer, nor any abatement of their devout intenſeneſs of mind, and earneſt fervour of affection ſtill. But now theſe men, being ſo *maimed* and *partial* in their ſervice, and having no *entire obedience* to confide in; they have not grace enough, as manifeſtly appears from what has (*a*)Book 3. been (*a*) ſaid upon that point, to bear them out, not ſo much vertue as God has indiſpenſibly required to ſave them.

As for theſe qualifications of our Prayers then, thoſe *ſenſible joys* and *paſſionate tranſports* which accompany them; they are no inſtance of obedience and ſaving grace themſelves, nor any certain argument that thoſe perſons are endowed with it who are allowed to enjoy them. They are oft-times found in ill men, who, ſo long as they reſt there and grow no better, cannot reaſonably expect to go to Heaven.

And then as for the other more acceptable and obedient tempers of our Prayers, ſuch as *humble reverence*, *truſt* and *dependence*, *ſubmiſſion* and *reſignedneſs*, &c. which the men of *ſober devotion* moſt juſtly prefer before the former, as uſually moſt *others* do when once their *religious heats* are over: though a growth in them is truly a growth in grace, yet a growth in them *alone* is not enough to ſave us. They indeed in *themſelves* are ſo many particular inſtances of obedience, and beſides that, they are alſo *great means* and proper inſtruments to produce others ſo that our growth in them, is a growth in ſome particular Graces; and a very likely way to grow in others: alſo. But ſtill we muſt remember, that they are but *one part of ſaving Grace*, and by no means the *whole*; ſo that (*b*) Eph. 4. 13. till we are grown in others too, we cannot hope to be ſaved by them. For this is the indiſpenſible condition of the Chriſtian Religion, and this the (*b*) *perfect man* and *juſt ſtature* in the Chriſtian Faith; that we be grown up to an *intire obedience in all our voluntary* and *choſen actions*, not only to *ſome few*, but *to all the parts of Duty*, and *the Laws of God*.

But

But if we would single out some *one*, or some *few Vertues*, from our growth and improvement wherein we may justly presume that we have attained to *saving degrees in all the rest*; Saint *James* directs us to the *Duties of the Tongue*, in abstaining from *backbiting*, *censuring*, and *evil-speaking*, &c. which under all the *invitations of Conversation*, and the *temptations of common life*, is usually the last point which good men gain, and that wherein (*g*) they, who scarce ever sin *wilfully at all*, or very *rarely*, are wont most frequently through *indeliberation* and *inadvisedness* to miscarry. *If any man*, saith he, *offendeth not in word*, but has attained to an innocent and obedient guidance of his Tongue, *that same* man need not be defective in other Duties, he *is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body*, James 3. 2.

(*g*) Eccles 19. 16. and 14. 1.

Thus is mens growth in *saving Grace*, not a growth only in some *one*, or in some *few Vertues*; but in an *universal* and *entire obedience*. And then they grow in it, when they come to perform the same, with more *ease* and *pleasure*, *constancy* and *evenness*, with *less mixture of involuntary sins*, which need particular Repentance, and with a *greater freedom from innocent and unwill'd Infirmities*. And this growth every Christian is bound incessantly to endeavour after. The longer he lives, the higher improvement ought he to make, and to attain every Vertue in a larger measure, and in greater firmness and perfection, than he had before. *Grow in grace*, says St. *Peter*, *and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, 2 Pet. 3. 18. *Forgetting those things which are behind* me, and already attained, says St. *Paul*, *and reaching out after those things which are* still *before me*, *I press on forward towards the mark*, that I may acquire a more compleat growth than yet I have. And *let as many* among you, *as be perfect be thus minded*, Phil. 3. 13, 14.

But then the obligation to this growth in this intire Obedience, is not laid upon them under the *forfeiture of Heaven*, but only of some *higher rewards*, and *greater degrees of happiness*, which are *to be enjoyed there*. For there are different degrees in happiness, answerable to the different measures in this intire Obedience. They that *perform* it most perfectly, shall be *rewarded highest*; and the more fixt and perfect they are in it, the less danger

are they under of falling back from it. But they who *perform it at all*, although they miſs of that acceſſion of reward, which by the Grace of the Goſpel is due to an eminent height of obedient endeavours, ſhall yet obtain the *pardon of their ſins*, and a *ſtate of joy* and *bleſſedneſs in Heaven*, as well as they who have endeavoured and performed more.

For an *entire Obedience in all choſen actions*, and a *particular repentance and amendment of all thoſe ſins wherein at any time we have wilfully diſobeyed God*, is ſufficient, as has been ſhewn, to ſecure the bleſſedneſs of the next life. And therefore if any Perſon has uſed God's Grace, and improved his Talents to this meaſure, he has not been unprofitable and uſeleſs, but hath profited ſo far as is neceſſary to his Happineſs. So that whilſt we are yet in the more imperfect meaſures of it, and only thirſt after a more perfect Obedience, that we may ſtill be more acceptable to God, and have right to a more noble and excellent Reward; we are in a ſafe ſtate, and have no need to diſquiet our Souls with fears and jealouſies, leſt they ſhould eternally miſcarry.

Several other Scruples there are, which are wont to diſquiet and perplex the minds of good and honeſt People, who are ſafe in God's Account, although their Caſe ſeems never ſo hazardous in their own. And of this ſort, are their fears, that their *Obedience is unſincere*, becauſe they have an *Eye at their own good*, and a reſpect to their own ſafety; ſince they ſerve God in hopes to be better by him, and out of a fear, ſhould they diſobey, of ſuffering evil from him. They are afraid alſo that it is defective in a main Point, for they cannot *love* and *ſerve* him in that comprehenſive Latitude which the Commandment requires, *viz. With all their heart, and with all their ſoul, and with all their mind.* They doubt they are *paſt Grace and Pardon*, becauſe they have *ſinned after that they have been enlightened*, and that *wilfully*: and the Apoſtle affirms that *for ſuch their remains no more Sacrifice for ſins*, Heb. 10. 26. Theſe doubts are ſtill apt to diſturb their peace, and make ſad their hearts; and ſome others of like nature.

But of theſe, and ſeveral others, I have given ſufficient Accounts above: ſuch as I hope, may ſatisfie any reaſonable man, who is capable to read and to conſider of them;

them; and thither I refer the Reader, not thinking fit here to repeat them.

And thus at last we have seen, when an *honest* and *entire Obedience* is taken care for in the first place, how plainly *groundless* those fears are, which are wont to perplex the thoughts, of good and safe, yet ignorant and misguided People, about their state of happiness and salvation.

And now I have done with all those Points, which I thought necessary to be inquired into, to the end that I might shew every man now before-hand how he stands prepared for the next World; and which at the beginning of this whole Discourse I proposed to treat of. I have shewn what *that condition is of bliss or misery, which the Gospel indispensibly exacts of*, and that as I take it, so particularly, that no man who will be at the pains to read and consider of it, need overlook or mistake it; what *those defects are, which it bears and dispenseth with*; what *those remedies* and *means of reconciliation are, which it has provided for us*; and, when all these are taken care for, how *groundless all those other Scruples are*, which are wont to disquiet honest minds about the goodness of their present state, and their title to eternal salvation.

And upon the whole matter, the summ of all amounts to this, that when *Christ* shall come to *sit in judgment at the last day*, and to pass sentence of life or death upon every man according to the direction of his Gospel, he will pronounce upon *every man according to his works*. If he has *honestly* and *entirely* obey'd the whole Will of God in all the particular Laws before-mentioned, *never wilfully and deliberately offending in any one instance*, nor *indulging himself in the practice of any thing which he knows to be a sin*; he is safe in the Accounts of the last Judgment, and shall never come into Condemnation. Nay, if he has been a *damnable Offender*, and has *wilfully transgressed*, either in *one* instance, or in *many*; in *frequent* repetitions of his sin, or in *few*; yet if he *repent of it before death seize him*, and *amend it e're he is haled away to Judgment*; he is *safe* still. For he shall be judged according as his Works then are, when God comes to enquire of them; so that if ever he be found in an honest Obedience observing every thing which he sees to be his duty, and

wilfully venturing upon nothing which his Conſcience tells him is ſinful; he is found in the ſtate of Grace and Pardon, and if he die in it, he ſhall be ſaved. All his *unwill'd ignorances*, and *innocent unadviſedneſſes*, *upon his Prayers for pardon* and *his mercifulneſs and forgiveneſs of other men*, ſhall be abated; all his other *cauſes of fear* and *ſcruple*, *ſhall be overlooked*; they ſhall not be brought againſt him to his Condemnation, but in the honeſt and entire Obedience which he hath performed, in that ſhall he live.

If then we have an *honeſt heart*, and walk ſo as our *own Conſcience* has no wilful ſin yet unrepented of whereof to accuſe us; we may meet Death with a good Courage, and go out of the World with comfortable Expectations. For if we have an honeſt and a tender heart, whenſoever we ſin wilfully and againſt our Conſciences, our own Souls will be our Remembrancers. They will be a witneſs againſt us, both whilſt we are in this World, and after we are taken out of it, and brought to Judgment. *Mens Conſciences*, ſays the Apoſtle, *ſhall accuſe or excuſe them, in the day when God ſhall judge the ſecrets of men according to my Goſpel*, Rom. 2. 15.

Indeed, if men have *harden'd their hearts in wickedneſs*, and ſinn'd themſelves out of the belief of their duty, having come to call *evil*, *good*; and *good*, *evil*: then their Conſcience having no further ſenſe of ſin, will have no accuſations upon it. But if they really believe the Goſpel, and ſtudy to know their duty, and deſire to obſerve it; and are afraid to offend in any thing which they ſee is ſinful: whilſt thus their heart is ſoft, and their Conſcience tender, they cannot venture upon any ſin with open Eyes, but their own hearts will both check them before, and ſmite them afterwards. They will have a Witneſs againſt them in their own Boſoms; which will ſcourge and awake them, ſo that they cannot approach Death without a ſenſe of their ſin, nor go out of the World without diſcerning themſelves to be guilty.

If our own Conſcience then cannot accuſe us, of the wilful and preſumptuous breach of any of God's Commandments, and we know of none but what we have repented of, we have juſt reaſon to take a good heart to our ſelves, and to wait for death in hopeful expectations.

If

If our own (h) *hearts condemn us not*, says St. *John*, *then have we confidence towards God*, 1 John 3. 21. There is no Sin that will damn us, but a wilful one; and when we sin wilfully, if our Heart is soft and honest, we sin wittingly and against our Conscience; our own Heart sees and observes it before, and will keep us in mind of it after we have committed it. So that if any Man has a vertuous and a tender Heart, a Heart that is truly desirous to obey God, and afraid in any thing to offend him; when his Conscience is silent he may justly conclude that his Condition is safe, for if it doth not condemn him, God never will. (h) 1 Pet. 3. 21.

An honest Man's Heart, I say must condemn him, before he have sufficient reason to condemn himself. And that too, not for every *idle Word*, or every *fruitless Lust*, or every involuntary *dulness of Spirit*, and *distraction in Prayer*, and *coldness in Devotion*, or such other *mistaken Marks* whereby too many are wont to judge of their Title to Salvation. No, Heaven and Hell are not made to depend upon these things; but although a Man be guilty of them, he may be eternally happy notwithstanding them. But that accusation of his Conscience, which may give an honest Man just reason to condemn himself, must be an Accusation, for a *wilful Breach* or *deliberate Transgression* of some particular Law of *Sobriety*, *Piety*, *Justice*, *Charity*, *Peaceableness*; it must accuse him of an unrepented Breach of some of those Laws above-mentioned, which God has plainly made the Terms of Life, and the Condition of Salvation.

And the Accusation for the Breach of these Laws, must be *particular and express*; not *general* and *roving*. For some are of so *suspicious* and *timorous* a Temper, that they are still suspecting and condemning of themselves, when they know not for what Reason. They will indict themselves, as Men who have sinned greatly, but they cannot shew wherein; they judge of themselves, not from any *Reason* or *Experience*, but at a *Venture*, and by *Chance*; they speak not so truly their *Opinions*, as their *Fears*; not what their *Understandings* see and discern, but what their *Melancholy* suggests to them. For ask them as to any one particular of the Laws of God, and run them all over, and their Consciences cannot charge them with any *wilful*, which is withal an *unrepented* Transgression

ſion of it. But let them overlook all Particulars, and paſs a Judgment of themſelves only in general, when they do not judge from particular Inſtances, which are true evidence, but only from groundleſs and ſmall Preſumptions; and then they paſs a hard Sentence upon themſelves, and conclude that their Sins are very great, and their Condition dangerous.

But no Man ſhall be ſentenced at the laſt Day, for Notions and Generalities; but it is our particular Sins, which muſt then condemn us. For God's Laws bind us all in ſingle Actions; and if our own Conſciences cannot condemn us for any one wilful, which is withal an unrepented action, God will not condemn us for them altogether.

If our own Heart therefore doth not accuſe us, for the *particular*, *wilful*, and *unrepented Breaches* of ſome or other of thoſe Laws above-mentioned, which God has made the indilpenſible Condition of our acceptance; we are ſecure as as to the next World, and may comfortably hope to be acquitted in the laſt Judgment. Being conſcious of no wilful Sin, but what we have repented of, and by Mercy and Forgiveneſs of other Men, and our Prayers to God, begging Pardon for our involuntary Sins; we ſhall have nothing that will lie heavy upon us at the laſt Day, but may go out of the World with eaſe, and die in Comfort. Our Departure hence may be in Peace, becauſe our Appearance at God's Tribunal ſhall be in Safety. For we ſhall have no worſe charged upon us there, than we are able here to charge upon our ſelves; but leaving this World in a good Conſcience, we ſhall be ſentenced in the next to a glorious Reward; and bid to enter into our Maſter's Joy, there to live with our Lord for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Soli Deo Gloria.

Wm Kurtin his Book